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ABSTRACT

Intended for use by individuals, groups of administrators, boards of trustees, parent groups, community service directors, and teachers, the articles presented in this volume are organized around four topics: values, faith, pluralism, and service. The articles include: "Maintaining the Moral Climate of the School" (G. Stern); "Schools as Families" (D. Lee, Jr.); "Ecce Quam Bonum" (H. T. Knox); "'You've Got to be Carefully Taught'...and Retaught" (J. Plummer); "Keeping the Fiddler on the Roof: The Challenge of Moral Education" (P. Barthelemy); "Faculty Vision" (P. Cobb); "The Curious Combination" (D. Heischman); "Beyond Darkness and Cynicism" (B. Schmidt, Jr.); "A Head Looks at Academic Integrity" (J. Hanly); "Sportsmanship" (B. Walsh); "Manners Make the Person" (F. W. Jarvis); "The Moral Purpose of Awards" (T. Farquhar); "The There-Should-Be-No-Pain Lie" (F. W. Jarvis); "A Simple Question" (M. Gorman); "That Troubling Word in Our Title" (D. Heischman); "What Makes It Worthwhile" (R. Pitman); "Ritual, Memory, and Meaning" (F. Scoble); "Answering That of God" (L. Fischbeck); "A Two-Fold Providence" (L. Gruzen); "Personal Canon" (R. Spalding); "The Returns of Education" (D. Heischman); "What To Do about Religious Illiteracy" (G. Robbins); "The Challenge of Religious Pluralism: Three Responses for Chaplains" (D. Heischman); "'Tis the Season" (D. Heischman); "Happy (?) Holidays" (M. Gorman); "A Pedagogy of Service" (R. Gross); "Serving the Server" (E. Lauderdale); and "Making a Difference" (W. Coffin), (DB)

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In Pursuit of Values In Search of Faith

An Anthology of CRIS Articles

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An Anthology of CRIS Articles

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Introduction

For many years now, the monthly CRIS *Newsletter* has stimulated, inspired, and informed school people around the country. A *Newsletter* reader may be a school head, association executive, division chair, classroom teacher, community service director, chaplain, parent, or trustee. Contributors have included some of the most respected educators in the independent-school world, while articles have addressed some of the most important moral, spiritual, and general educational issues within that world. The *Newsletter* is a significant educational forum, and appreciation for it runs wide and deep.

In more recent years, *The Chaplain's Craft* has served a similar function for a narrower audience. As a quarterly journal of theological reflection within the school world, *The Chaplain's Craft* has raised, and often suggested answers to, questions that are no less important and no less difficult than those addressed in the *Newsletter*.

This collection of previously published articles from the *Newsletter* and *The Chaplain's Craft* brings together in one place some of the most stimulating pieces from those two publications. As such, it can serve a broader audience than the monthly or quarterly alone, and it can be used in new ways.

The *Newsletter* goes out primarily to CRIS member schools, which receive from one to four copies, depending on their membership status. Copies are often passed around and lost or dog-eared in the process. This more permanent anthology permits administrators, teachers, trustees, parents, student leaders, and others to contemplate a variety of important issues in education that have been raised in print over the last few years. It also allows schools who have not been CRIS members to have, in one place, recent thought-provoking articles on key issues.

CRIS hopes that *In Pursuit of Values, In Search of Faith* will be widely used not only by individuals but also by groups of administrators, entire faculties, boards of trustees, parent groups, and student leadership associations. In addition, schools may also wish to acquire and study the companion volume, *Crossroads: Integrated Models for Teaching Ethics and Spirituality*.

VALUES

Maintaining the Moral Climate of the School

by Gladys M. Stern, Director
Georgetown Day School (DC)

Address to the Association of Independent Schools of Greater Washington Heads' Conference, May 1, 1990

Many events have a way of overriding or bypassing predictions, so that any prognostication of what education will be like in the '90s is speculative at best. There are, however, changes in society that influence educational trends and outcomes, and it may be worthwhile to examine those trends.

The School's New Role

Family configurations and lifestyles began to change in the '70s and '80s; the increase in single parents and families in which both parents work outside the home resulted in children either spending longer hours in school or becoming latchkey children. In both cases more independence was expected of children. This trend will no doubt continue in the '90s. In some instances, especially where children are expected to fend for themselves between the end of school and the arrival time of parents, surface independence masks a fear of an inability to cope. Schools have had to assume a societal responsibility for students that transcends the teaching of subject matter as they respond to the changed needs of children—by providing after-school care, by adding life skills courses to the curriculum, by providing more counseling functions, by extending extra-curricular activities. Although colleges today do not stand *in loco parentis* as they once did, elementary and high schools must now provide more than educational support. Certainly we will see more of this school parenting in the '90s.

There is in every school a values curriculum that may or may not be as explicitly stated as the educational curriculum, but it is nevertheless present. Children absorb or emulate from the ethos of a school, or from the expectations for certain standards, or from what the teacher and the school *are*, in ethical terms. This values curriculum has sociological and psychological aspects, and as John Dewey said, "Perhaps the

greatest of all pedagogical fallacies is the notion that a person learns only the particular thing he is studying at the time." The role of the head of the school is crucial in the setting of that values curriculum. We could all say, if asked our opinion of sin, "I'm against it," but the greater burden we carry is to have the vision, the judgment, and the strength of purpose and character to live by the moral precepts we extol, and that is not as easily done as said. We have many constituencies—parents, students, faculty, staff, the greater community, to name some—and the needs and wants of those constituencies sometimes come into conflict with one another.

Conflicting Interests

What happens when the son of the biggest contributor to the capital campaign gets into such serious trouble that the principal of that section of the school recommends expulsion and the family begs for one more chance? What happens when, after acceptance to a college, a senior on a school-sponsored trip gets sent home for getting drunk and is suspended, and the college counselor finds in his mail that very day a routine questionnaire from that college asking if the student has ever been suspended? What happens at admission time when choices have to be made between a child whose talents are obvious, to whom you could make a difference, and the less able, less deserving child whose family could be of great service to the school or could add a nationally known name to its rolls? What happens when a decision is made by a middle manager that is not entirely appropriate and the injured party comes to you for redress? Do you support the person to whom you have delegated the responsibility—even though you would not have acted in that manner—because not to support is to undercut?

We would like to say that we always act forthrightly in every instance, but the fact is that we sometimes waffle. Expediency becomes a goal, and the greater moral purpose is sometimes overlooked. In the real examples just mentioned, we did *not* waffle, but in every case it was hard work.

The students who attend our schools are products not only of our institutions but of their families and of the communities in which we live, and they absorb their values from each of those environments. The mother of a little six-year-old girl made a bowl of chocolate pudding, but, not feeling too well since she was pregnant with her third child, went into the bedroom to rest. She told the six-year-old that when the pudding cooled she could take some for herself and could dish out some for her younger brother, who was four. A few minutes later, the six-year-old came

into the bedroom and said, "I have good news and bad news. The bad news is that the bowl slipped off the table and spilled pudding on the floor. The good news is that I cleaned up the mess. The bad news is that there wasn't enough pudding left to give Danny any, but the good news is the pudding was delicious." She resolved the ethical dilemma by waffling, finding herself not guilty of sloth or selfishness. Incidentally, this little girl is my granddaughter.

Peers—The New Moral Authority

A more serious problem occurs when a seventeen-year-old feels it is all right to cheat, but not to get caught, and who angrily denies having cheated, threatens the student who followed the honor code and turned him in, states that the teacher saw him and didn't stop him, and claims that he was too busy with good deeds in other areas of his life to study. The March 1990 issue of the magazine *Teacher* has a report by child psychiatrist Robert Coles on *The Girl Scouts Survey* of children's values conducted by Coles and his colleagues. Of special interest to those of us who run independent schools is the finding that money seems to blur one's moral judgment. For reasons that are not clear, children from families in the highest tax brackets express greater uncertainty when confronted with a morally ambiguous situation.

To quote the article: "Most children (94 percent) believe their parents care for them and still go to parents for advice (64 percent) when confronted with a problem. However, as kids get older, they turn more often to each other and less often to their parents for advice. By high school, 58 percent of the children say they would be more likely to ask a friend their own age for advice."

Far more disturbing is what survey researchers call "the wallpaper factor" — that is, the clear reluctance of children to take their problems to other traditional authority figures, notably teachers and religious leaders. About a third of the children agree that their teachers care for them, for example, but only 7 percent would turn to them for advice in a matter of personal values. And despite the fact that most of the children (82 percent) believe there is a God, that more than a third have had a significant religious experience that changed the direction of their lives, and that nearly 40 percent pray daily, only 3 percent of the children would seek out a member of the clergy for help with a moral problem. Clearly, what we like to think of as "traditional" sources of authority are no longer taken seriously. When it comes to the truly serious issues of right and wrong in children's lives, teachers and clergy are, in the words of the Coles report, "much like wallpaper, present —

but almost purely decorative." Nevertheless, it is important to note that the survey found that *children whose moral standards are rooted in religion or in a sense of civic responsibility show the most resistance to the temptation to violate extremely important rules*—such as "Thou shalt not cheat."

We who are in positions of moral responsibility in schools all have our own moral compasses, and our own tendencies to view ethical decision-making in absolute terms or not. This greatly affects the way we deal with children who do break important rules. For myself, in those long sleepless nights before committing to a decision, I think of the redemption of students. I believe in the absolute, but sometimes in practice I temper that by deciding that the *behavior* is bad, not the student, and that the punishment should have redemptive possibilities. We have expelled students, but we have left the door open for a return in another year, should amended behavior be forthcoming.

Educating Parents, Too

Any discussion of maintaining the moral climate in the school must include the necessity of helping to educate parents as well. In recent years we find more and more parents who ask for help in bringing up children and in establishing behavioral standards for them. I believe that we will, in the '90s, be in a position of educating parents as well as children on moral and ethical issues.

Morality in schools is best maintained by trying to educate each of the constituencies—students, parents, faculty. That education is best done by an insistence on each living one's ideals and by not waffling on the greater issues. Although our school administration is, on paper, hierarchical, in actuality it is more collegial. When faculty feel empowered, they take pride in carrying out the mission of the school, especially the moral mission. As Director, I seek every opportunity to educate our faculty and parents about the moral foundations on which the school was founded, and to the values to which we are committed. The mission of the head of the school is to have vision and judgment, to be a teacher of teachers, a mentor for parents, an advocate for children—for one cannot inculcate a moral standard in children if the other adults in their lives are not living moral lives themselves.

Webster's dictionary describes education as "the process of training and developing the knowledge, skill, mind, and character." Morality is defined as "the education of character." Schools have always been relied upon to instill and ensure good character in students, and in recent years have, of necessity, *had* to do so. We

share with parents our vision, encourage them to support our goals. Although we cannot legislate home behavioral rules, we do suggest that parents not permit parties to take place unchaperoned, that beer not be served to minors, that children be taught good nutrition, that parents know where their children are and with whom they associate, and that parents talk to each other about common standards.

We are partners in this business of educating children, and together we must take care to see that in addition to learning reading, writing, and arithmetic, or narration, philosophy, and calculus, that our children become generous, humane, compassionate, just, and comfortable adults. This is not an easy task, for there are conflicts in the values curriculum, and the desire of parents and children to be accepted by peers, the changing standards of acceptability in human relationships, and the normal and necessary pulling away of adolescents, serve to make the task harder.

By the time high-schoolers graduate, we trust that they will be able to leave home, live in a world in which no one sits *in loco parentis* and in which choices of friends, ideas, and behavior are all up to the individual. We hope they will have learned to value honesty, obey the laws of society, serve their community, and defer immediate gratification in order to work for distant goals.

The task ahead is indeed formidable, but a stimulating and exciting one. I wish us all Godspeed in the undertaking of it.

Reprinted from the September 1990 issue of the Newsletter

Schools As Families

Daniel Lee, Jr.
Headmaster
Miss Hall's School (MA)

It must be clear to all of us in this room that our independent schools currently face, or soon will face, a series of challenges that threaten fundamental areas of school life. Our secondary schools are just now encountering the shrinking candidate pool that has in recent years plagued our elementary schools. The word "demographics" has become as central to our vocabularies as "curriculum" and "discipline." The new tax law removes much incentive from charitable giving at a time when competition for the charitable dollar has, at least in our opinion, never been keener. Substance abuse in adolescent years is once again a national issue just as it was in the early '70s, years many of us in schools would rather forget. As if these three challenges were not enough, there is yet another nemesis on the horizon: the impending crisis in teacher recruitment. These four issues truly get to the very core of our existence as schools. They affect the size and the quality of our enrollments, the quality of our faculties, the social environment of our campuses, and yes, fundraising.

Family as a Distinctive Trait

I would like to suggest a very simple, straight-forward strategy for weathering these storms. It is a strategy that should: (a) make our schools increasingly appealing despite the demographics; (b) provide our schools with a competitive edge in attracting and retaining superb faculties; (c) help us to make a strong case for increased financial support from our parents and our graduates, and even, (d) enable us to make strides in the area of drug and alcohol abuse. My simple strategy is for us to recognize that which sets us apart from public schools and from American colleges and universities. We need to recognize it, to publicize it, and most of all, to practice and perfect it. The "it," in my opinion, is the fundamental fact that independent schools, more than any other institutions I know, resemble families—caring, loving families. When we are at our best, we are family "writ large."

Pockets of American society cry out for a return to the pre- eminence of family structure, family values, and the kind of love and support families best provide. And we have it right here in our best independent schools. If we continue to practice and perfect the family nature of our schools, we will not want for applicants; we will not want for first-rate faculties; and we will not want for the funds we require to offer the finest education available in this country.

We consider ourselves to be family schools and we do our very best to replicate those qualities found in a loving family. I have two families in my life. I have the Lee family, my wife Susie and my five-year-old son Daniel. I have the Miss Hall's family of 200 girls and scores of faculty and staff. As I think about my two families, I realize that there are certain words and five certain phrases that are central to the life of the Lee family and to the life of the Miss Hall's family.

The Family's Language

The first of these words and phrases are "please" and "thank you." How many times have Susie and I said to Daniel, "Did you say please?" or, "Did you say thank you?" In our schools, we try to instill manners, civility, and consideration.

The second phase is "Good job." I say that constantly to my son. If I throw him a ball and it deflects off his finger, I say "Good job!" We need to work on it, but a least the finger hit the ball. Students need to hear "Good job!" We need to hear that we are doing well; it leads to confidence and self-esteem. We all know that success breeds success.

The third word is "No." Very simply, "No." Daniel needs limits, and we all need limits. As some of you in this room might agree, we don't say "no" often enough in 1987 in America. We have to have discipline; we have to have clear expectations; and we believe that structure and discipline are both clear signs of love.

The fourth and final phrase is, "I love you." Our actions, of course, are important; but the words come first. I remember listening to another Headmaster's speech in which he told of a clergyman in Westchester County who polled the students who came to his Sunday School classes—bright, affluent, well-cared-for children. He asked them, "If I could absolutely guarantee an honest answer to absolutely any question, what question would you ask me?" Consistently, the most common question was, "Do my parents love me?"

In independent schools, we do our very best to show in words and action that we truly do love our students. How do we show it? By willingly spending time with our students. You spend time with people you love. By telling them they are capable of better work if indeed that's the case. By responding to their occasional calls for help, and by doing our very best to anticipate their needs before they become calls for help. And by recognizing that we too can learn from them. Finally, we show our love by regularly, enthusiastically, and genuinely using the vocabulary of a loving family: "Please"; "Thank you"; "Good job"; "No"; and "I love you."

Reprinted from the November 1987 issue of the **Newsletter**.

Ecce Quam Bonum

The Rev. H. Thomas Knox
Chaplain, St. Andrew's-Sewanee School
St. Andrews, Tennessee

In a culture that applauds sheer size, and that often defines the success of educational institutions in terms of large budgets and vast numbers of persons, there are schools around that provide alternatives to such artificial values.

Several years ago, St. Andrew's-Sewanee School struggled with the nature and function of our system of discipline in general and advisement in particular. This exploration led us to the recognition that the larger a school becomes, the greater the number of bureaucratic measures that have to be in place. As we continued to question our identity, we began to articulate a desire to operate more like a family than a bureaucracy, and this awareness led to a commitment to remain a small institution. By the fall of 1987 the school's faculty and Board of Trustees had spent a good deal of time coming to consensus on assumptions based upon the mission statement of the school. Among the assumptions formally adopted as policy in October of that year are the following:

- A family model—as opposed to an impersonal, bureaucratic model—is the basis for community life. As in a family, there are normal operating procedures; but sometimes the discretion of a faculty member may determine an action taken with a particular student. The informal environment of the school means that barriers between adults and young people are perhaps fewer than in other communities.

- Optimum enrollment for the school is 240 students; maximum capacity is 250 students.

In other words, the faculty and trustees made a conscious decision about our emerging community: that size was indeed to be limited, so that opportunities for the individual to interact with that community would essentially be unlimited.

In the years since, I have grown in appreciation of the theological implications of this decision. As a parish priest I had spent years preaching about and trying to help create communities within large parishes with people from many different neighborhoods. What I am now experiencing as a chaplain at a small school is the deeper reality of the community life I had hoped for while in parish work. Because of our size, and our rather remote location on top of Monteagle Mountain, we are privileged not so much to talk about community, but to live it—often at a fairly intense level.

An Exceptional Norm

Several weeks after I arrived at St. Andrew's-Sewanee in 1984, a 16-year-old approached me with, "Padre, there's something wrong between us, and I propose we get it worked out." Few adults or adolescents had ever so confronted me; but if my original assumption was that this directness was rare, it soon gave way to experience of such openness as more the norm than the exception. I attribute this phenomenon in large part to two factors. First, the school is intentional about remaining small, thus enabling everyone to know well every member of the community. Second, the school attempts to live out a faith that is incarnational, that underscores the necessity for believers to move, to touch, to connect, to flesh it out in the world. Another student's observation clarifies this: "We have to learn how to get along here; there's no place to escape to or diversions to hide behind—we *have* to work it out."

For all of us in small schools rooted in Judeo-Christian faith and tradition, there is a tremendous challenge, opportunity, and mandate to make an impact on the lives of children who come to us from a culture in which the experience of intimate human contact is becoming more and more rare. In a society that values "advancements" such as automatic teller machines and other devices created to save time and make people more comfortable, the art of human interaction is becoming less and less known and practiced. Personal involvement and attention may well be luxuries of the future. I believe that the vessels of this luxury will be young persons who have emerged from small schools that have a theological underpinning—schools that provide an environment where, along with intellectual pursuits and physical development, there is an opportunity to learn the art of *living together*. The motto of our neighbor institution, The University of the South, says it powerfully: "*Ecce Quam Bonum*" ("Behold, how good and pleasant it is [when brothers and sisters dwell in unity!]," Psalm 133:1).

For many of us in this place, such unity is not a lofty ideal but a living reality. A former student, who left several years ago under less than ideal circumstances, has written, "When I left SAS I wanted to forget about that place and some of the people there. But the memories kept coming back—and they weren't haunting. I had some special times and shared some special friendships that can never be replaced. I have also learned many valuable lessons from the tribulations experienced at SAS." How enriching it was for this student, and for all of us who are a part of this kind of school, to live in an environment that calls us daily to see ourselves honestly, accepts us as we are, and encourages us to grow.

I enjoy living in the paradox of a society that espouses bigger as better, yet at the same time allows, even enables to flourish, small and seemingly insignificant institutions such as St. Andrew's-Sewanee. It is my conviction that the future of life on "this fragile earth our island home" will depend on those of our students who have confronted this paradox, and have learned from experience to appreciate the small gestures and interactions that make life rich and full—indeed, that make humane life possible.

Reprinted from the Spring 1990 issue of ***The Chaplain's Craft***

'You've Got to be Carefully Taught' . . . and Re-taught

Janet Plummer, The Fessenden School (MA)

With credit to Rodgers and Hammerstein, "You've got to be carefully taught" seems to embody the range of approaches necessary for a school to engage in a serious program of character education.

Before a two-day series of CRIS workshops, our school was in need of a spiritual facelift, a series of actions that would provide it with more positive approaches and ways to reaffirm our beliefs to make the whole Fessy community not only happier but more disciplined and self-confident. The workshop results became an ongoing program under the guidance of a self-selecting committee and the long-distance encouragement of CRIS.

Steps Toward Renewal: The Students

First, we dispensed with the old discipline slips and instead used them for commendations, public notices of good deeds. Then, the headmaster wrote a clear message to parents emphasizing our new three value focus — honesty, compassion and respect — and our expectations for the parents. Art students designed three colorful value-word banners, permanently hung in the big schoolroom.

Best of all, we borrowed an idea from The Peck School (NJ) and instituted the Fessy Bear of the Week — an honor given to the student who exemplifies in some small way honesty, compassion, respect. A brass and silver bear paw pin is awarded each week for academic effort and ensuing growth, running the Boston Marathon, being respected by peers, or being a friend to all. The winners are proud to wear the pin and the good-natured ragging that occurs usually has an undertone of admiration.

Our newly organized homerooms, useful vehicles to further values education, have also helped our assemblies. Once we were able to convince ourselves that, if we believed in a humanitarian message, the kids would, too, everything began to fall into place. We instituted a Thanksgiving assembly, a traditional and moving

meeting. A Christmas/Chanukah assembly naturally followed. From food baskets and candlelight in November to an irreverent Santa and his ninth-grade elves in December, the gatherings were eagerly embraced by the boys. In the spring, a "year-in-retrospect" assembly included the fifth-grade teacher's annual slide-show plus segments from the "weekly review," a video-taped news magazine produced by students and teachers and usually shown every Monday morning.

This past year, the seventh grade presented us with a challenge. The class was both intelligent and insecure. Unable to create positive peer pressure, they cut each other down and were afraid to be good. Committed to our belief in compassion, the school decided on a year-long course of action, based on firmness and caring. We held a day-long workshop for all seventh-graders using Bradbury's "All Summer in a Day," discussion, case studies, writing and group exercises in the form of New Games and run by faculty and ninth-graders. Seventh-grade parents were invited for an evening of sharing research, ideas, and suggestions. It hasn't ended there: as part of the values program, teachers have been asked to place equal emphases on moral behavior and academics. It has not, therefore, been uncommon to stop class in the middle of a lesson to deliver "Compassion and Respect Lecture no. 1003," or halt the van en route to a movie to deal with unjust or uncivilized behavior. Seventh-grade boys have been grouped in three's with a faculty member to go out to lunch—to get to know someone who's not already a friend. As one parent told the assembled group that magical night of the parent meeting, her son, Nick, and Mason decided that their love of computers was a good basis for friendship, a friendship that might not have come about in the pressured peer groups at school.

Maintaining Momentum: The Faculty

Admittedly, generating ideas and enthusiasm and getting programs started is easier than maintaining them. One method of continued inspiration that we've discovered is to explain the program to another institution, in this case The Foote School in New Haven. In December, three of us journeyed there, upon the invitation of Frank Perrine (Head of Foote), and spent two delightful days sharing experiences and giving and receiving suggestions. They, too, had difficulties with peer pressure and the "odd man out" syndrome. Their community service and Project Adventure programs may serve as models for us. One common challenge surfaced, and that is what we are currently concentrating on: the education and care of the faculty.

The faculty, daring to risk and laugh together, generally feel appreciated and valued by the administration. Yet they need to re-state the school philosophy, to

define it in terms that will allow each of them to find a comfortable niche in the school and get on with the business of educating children academically and morally. Our spring in-service day is dedicated to a moral revitalization of our teaching cares and concerns. It requires a lot of planning, a little delicate tiptoeing, and some straightforward barging into issues. But with our increased emphasis on honesty, compassion, and respect, we provide a warm, safe environment — one that will eventually allow each of us to be just as kind and caring as the member of the community who once wrote on the bottom of a faculty survey about the best and worst at Fessenden: "You're terrific."

Reprinted from the January 1988 issue of the Newsletter

Keeping the Fiddler on the Roof: The Challenge of Moral Education

The Rev. Paul B. Barthelemy
Chaplain and Head of the Religion Department
Hawaii Preparatory Academy
Kamuela, Hawaii

Not long ago I attended a conference at which two speakers back-to-back (both very convincing, I might add) remarked that, first, there is no correlation between the values of parents and how their kids turn out; and second, that young people in their teens and twenties today are "doomed" because of their parents' failure to pass on their values to them.

Now how do you deal with that? One's right and one's wrong? They're both somewhat right? They're both somewhat wrong? I don't know. What disturbs me most is the negative cant (typified by my second speaker) that parades around like one of those wraiths in an old *New Yorker* drawing proclaiming that the end is at hand. I keep hearing echoes of a song from *Bye Bye Birdie*, "Kids...why can't they be like we were, perfect in every way, what's the matter with kids today!" That was written in the 1950s. The more things change, the more they are the same. Frankly, I am more optimistic about kids and schools and families because I feel that our race is more resilient than the nay-sayers are giving it credit for. Given the right setting I can't help but think that things *can* be okay. Notice I didn't say *will*; I'm still hedging my bets.

I'm not so naive or foolhardy, however, to believe that there is no need for moral education. Clearly there is. Dr. Kevin Ryan of Boston University, in his book *Character Development in Schools and Beyond*, suggests six essential ingredients of moral education, the six "E's,"—Example, Explanation, Exhortation, Evaluation, Experience, and Environment and Ethos. These E's provide a framework for my thinking about moral education. Let me expand.

Example

One major problem for young people today is the absence of positive examples of moral behavior or the presence of negative ones. Steve Kurtz, retired head of Exeter, notes that "the average teenage kid...is being educated largely by the media." And what about media heroes? What kind of an age is it that makes a media hero out of a liar, however bemedaled or nobly-motivated he may have been? What example does that give? What message does that send? When gods and heroes die, what's left? As essayist Robert Stone has said, "...when they've said no to crack, can we someday give them something to say yes to?" Schools, boarding schools in particular, are more and more in the position of providing positive examples of moral behavior for children, often in conflict with "designer parents" (as one colleague calls them) who look at schools as educational boutiques offering their children guaranteed academic success plus a ticket to the right college immediately following graduation.

Explanation

Another major problem is lack of explanation. Ethical behavior is learned behavior. If one is not told or taught, one doesn't learn. At our school we teach ethics and honor; we have "rules" and "standards," somewhat suspect words to the permissive generation who resist standards and their explanations. I think it is painfully shortsighted to use the '60s and their wake of "permissiveness" as whipping boy for all the troubles of today. From the point-of-view of social morality at least, the '60s seem to me to have been on a higher plane than today. We ought to lament, however, the permissiveness from that era, which fused with resurgent '50s acquisitiveness into "yuppieness." One of the most insightful reactions I heard to last October's stock market crash came from an anonymous woman interviewed in a brief TV news report. Asked what she thought had caused the problem, "too many yuppie stockbrokers under thirty on Wall Street who've never experienced loss!" Part of ethical education after all is experiencing *failure* and *loss*, two very un-yuppie-like experiences. Learning ethical behavior is learning about consequences, pleasant and unpleasant, something teenagers have a hard time with. But learn it in our school they do, sometimes painfully, but, I hope, without seeing loss or failure as the end.

Exhortation

The third "E" is Exhortation. There are times in a school or a family when simply nothing else will do. To me (and it may simply be the trade I ply that leads me to say this) it is sad indeed that "preaching" has become a dirty word. One of

my staff members recoiled at my use of the word "preacher" on the program for our Baccalaureate service, preferring that I use "speaker." Does Isaiah sound like a "speaker?" Did Jesus deliver a "speech" on the mount? Thank God in a church school, *our school*, there can still be preaching, godly admonition, and exhortation on subjects of ethical importance. There are those moments when nothing else will do.

Evaluation

Socrates, I believe, it was who said, "the unexamined life is not worth living." Many observers of today's youth note that they are becoming narcissistic, demanding, unstable, and soft.

Oddly, in becoming so self-centered and self-conscious it seems to me they become less reflective and less *self*-conscious: "He who gains his life will lose it." It is only through examination and evaluation of one's own actions and those of others in the family, school, and community that real *self*-consciousness is possible. The examined life is worth living, though it is hard and involves some giving up of *self*: "He who loses his life will gain it." In our ethics classes we place a heavy emphasis on evaluation of what's happening in our school and at home. That leads me to Dr. Ryan's next E.

Experience

Dr. Martha Straus in a recent issue of *Independent School* magazine makes these remarks: "It is all too possible for a young person to graduate from high school without ever having had to do a piece of work on which someone else depended...Adolescents need to learn how to care about others, not just in the classroom, but by doing it, by spending time with the elderly, the sick, the young, and the lonely as part of their education." Again, doing good is *learned behavior* and must be taught. We try to do that through community service, student leadership seminars, the honor code, and a host of other little ways too many to number. I hope it works. Finding out takes time, lots of it!

Environment/Ethos

I like both words. Environment is to me more objective. Ethos is good because it isn't. In a sense these "E's" sum up the rest, for environment must consist of examples, explanations, exhortation, evaluations, and experiences. Environment combined with tradition creates ethos, the "feel" of a place, its "tone." Here is where tradition contributes so much. The sad message is that in schools where

tradition bit the dust in the '60s and '70s, the fiddler fell off the roof, and it's a long climb back up. To pursue that metaphor a bit further, I think architecture has a lot to do with ethos. Our school is composed largely of creaky, drafty, pre-and post-revolutionary clapboard houses. They wreak havoc with the budget, but I wouldn't trade them for all the high-tech towers of the eighties. Tradition fairly oozes out of their cracks, and I am convinced that they have a stabilizing effect on our school community. Sometimes I think I can even hear the fiddler on the roof.

Let me close by reemphasizing the importance and the difficulty of providing moral education. I fear that too often we're looking for a cookbook recipe: 2 cups of this, 1/2 teaspoon of that, 3 tablespoons of that. Roll it and pat it and mark it with "E," and put it in the oven, and out comes an ethical person. I don't think that's the way it works, so I can't give you the recipe and, believe me, in moral education there are no fast-food restaurants. For us in a church school there is another critical factor that can easily be swallowed up in all the rhetoric. Our basis for moral education is not simply philosophical; it is theological!

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Love of neighbor through honorable conduct and ethical behavior is a theological imperative that is "like unto" (that means, equal to) love for God. In a church school moral education means passing on to the young a way of life, a way shown us by someone through example, explanation, and exhortation; a way that shows us that failure and loss are not the end. I hope that the environment of our school creates an ethos which convinces students that that way is the way of abundant and meaningful life.

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Faculty Vision

Peter Cobb
Head, The Nichols School (NY)

When I look for the qualities of a teacher, I guess I put at the top of my list enthusiasm or, what is for me a better word, *passion*. I have frequently said that teaching is a sharing of passion, and I believe that deeply. Aligned with passion must be integrity and conviction, helped by a lack of self-consciousness. It is this last quality I find so rare and one that I self-consciously look for.

If I were to go beyond that, I would say that self-reflectiveness is an important quality of the successful teacher. One needs to model if not the contemplative life, at least the reflective one. I would also mention these qualities: Trust in one's self. Confidence. A deep and abiding belief in youngsters—in their promise and in their future. Teaching, more than any other single enterprise, is a commitment to the future, and I think we need to look upon it with optimism and enthusiasm. Children today too often feel impotent in the face of what lies before them. It is our mission to empower.

Superseding the Lessons of the Day

To continue. I would like at this school teachers who take exception to the easy answer, to thoughtless behavior, who will move to correct and intervene in appropriate fashion. I want teachers who are unafraid to confront, to challenge student values—not to displace them, but to provide perspective for scrutiny. I wish for this school, further, teachers who will depart a lesson to speak of matters of ethical or social concern, who realize that lessons of life must supersede lessons of the day.

To continue with my search for those who, if they can't teach, can certainly qualify for canonization. I wish around these halls teachers who are aware of the value constellation of their students, remember their own emerging values as youngsters, and can sense whether that value constellation has definition and

coherence and integrity. I want teachers who are in touch with a child's feelings and for whom acknowledgement of those feelings is of paramount importance.

The litany and the list go on. I wish in this profession men and women for whom the character of their charges is relevant to all that they do, teachers who will not only draw boundaries for behavior but set standards of behavior that children can see and emulate. That is all a very tall order.

Passionate Love

I once had a teacher at Union Theological Seminary, Daniel Day Williams, a saint against whom I will measure all of us mere mortals. In a meeting in which we were to "identify" ourselves, Dan acknowledged that he had never been able to resolve the issue of what he loved more: his academic discipline or his students. He loved both passionately. I want, finally, teachers who are caught on the horns of the same dilemma.

I cannot separate out which of these qualities are more important. Nor can I tell anyone precisely what I do to identify these qualities in faculty candidates. I guess I rely on instinct as much as anything. Not terribly qualitative. But I have found in this business to trust my instincts more than résumés. I do tell teachers in the interviewing process that I will expect more of them than I could ever put in a job description. I tell them that I want them to feel that there are not enough hours in the day to be advocates of and participants in their students' growth. I do not expect martyrdom—or perhaps I do—but I do hold forth a vision of selfless devotion, of engagement and enthusiasm; indeed, of vocational ardor. Teaching is an inherently and intensely arduous enterprise, and it cannot be done masterfully without devotion.

All of these qualities, these values, are implied more than stated in the printed mission of this school, which concentrates more on our hopes for the child. But, ultimately, the hopes for our children are and must be our hopes for ourselves. We cannot presume on them what we do not presume on ourselves by way of academic and personal virtue.

I believe that these thoughts convey my vision of the ideal role of a faculty member in a school today. I would add a caveat, however. There is no one ideal role. I go back to the Biblical view of persons having different gifts. There is no one model, thank goodness, that can serve for the effective teacher. It is, rather, in

the exposure and expression of our humanity, with whatever strengths and failings we bring to that, that finally will lead our children honestly into their adulthood. I can enumerate the various roles we ask our teachers to assume, but the roles taken out of context do serious injustice to the composite picture. All that we finally ask is what Daniel Day Williams asked of himself: that we love what we teach and we love those whom we teach. That is the calling I hope beckons each generation to assume the mantle of teacher.

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The Curious Combination

Daniel R. Heischman
Executive Director
CRIS

Recently I read about someone being honored for his many years of devoted service to an institution. The speaker, who highlighted the varied gifts of this individual, spoke of what he referred to as the "hyphenated ministry" of this person: the way he combined talents and exemplified a rich blend of vocations, such as scholar-teacher, leader-pastor, chaplain-writer. "It is a tribute to his extraordinary gifts that one is always adding that hyphen to what he does," the speaker concluded. That hyphen bespoke the wonderful variety that characterized his ministry over the years.

The same, I think, can be said of morality, and the moral climates we strive to create in our schools. A moral person, a moral environment is always a "hyphenated" one, characterized by a curious, sometimes seemingly contradictory blend of qualities. He is someone who has high standards, yet is also flexible; this particular administrator can be tough, but also shows deep compassion; a given school is rigorous, but also humane and caring; that person or that institution is highly intellectual, but also approachable; she is intensely serious, but also possesses a sense of humor.

"Hyphenation" and Integrity

It is this combination of teacher-pastor, intellect-mentor, rigor-accessibility, that constitutes the hyphenated factor in morality. Rarely can one be moral if only stern, or only caring; scarce are the school environments which are truly moral solely because they are "tough" on students, or only because they are always giving students a break. Standards must be there, but also approachability and amiability; pride, but also humility.

Perhaps our goal this year, as educators, as school communities, should not be confined to a simple "get tough" or "get with it" policy, but to a curious combination of traits, a hyphenated ministry to young people, which models to our

students the surprising reality that two seemingly contradictory qualities can be present and genuinely thrive in an individual or institution.

While many of us are prone to think that we can't be two things at once, have you ever encountered someone of genuine integrity who was not so "hyphenated"? Or can we recall an institution, of which we have been a part and which we would consider to possess a moral climate, that did not have such a magical blend?

One of the things that strikes me, as I travel around the country, is the growing belief on the part of many people that you can't be a "good" school (translated: academically topnotch) while retaining a humane environment. Similarly, many of our students seem to equate worldly success with a toughness and an ambitiousness void of grace and tenderness.

Perhaps a "hyphenated" model, held up to our students, their parents, our faculty, can help to counteract that simplistic view. Like a dance, so with "success" and morality: it takes a combination, two forces working in concert, yet each also distinctive, to bring the task to fruition.

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Beyond Darkness and Cynicism

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Why do we take such delicious pleasure in the foibles of our religious leaders? Obviously they can be ludicrous, as revealed in the recent difficulties of cash Christianity among the television evangelists. But our cynicism cuts much deeper.

It recently received characteristic expression in a review of a recent biography of C.S. Lewis, in which the reviewer took the author to task for not focussing adequate attention on the dark sexual side of Mr. Lewis's fantasy life. Only with such focus, we are assured, would the biography have managed to make its subject come alive.

Our Fascination with the Dark Side

This little example, which could be endlessly extended today, reveals the fascination of our time with the dark side. Of everything. And our equation, terribly simplistic, of pathology, of neurosis, of simple down-and-out rotten behavior with authenticity, with what is dramatic and interesting, with what is real. The presumption of our day is all but irrebuttable that it is our indiscretions and our failings, not our aspirations nor even our good works, that reveal who we are—that we are truer to ourselves in our nightmares than in our sweet dreams—that we haven't really seen "our man for all season" in the flesh or in print until we've caught him off guard. The rest is sham and evasion. And finally, there is the presumption that altruism and virtue—and the pursuit of these—are suspect, selfish, and cannot withstand the harsh light of objective scrutiny.

To suppose that this dark side of C.S. Lewis calls into question his religious beliefs is to miss the richest insights of the Judeo-Christian tradition—and of other religious traditions as well. Of course, Lewis was seriously flawed. He was a human being. So are we all, flawed and human. And of course, C.S. Lewis's Christianity was "intertwined with his zoo of lusts." Most of our choices—whether religious or secular—are subject to psychoanalytic explanations and instinctual appetites, and many of them are made for complex and various reasons. But to stop there in nihilistic self-satisfaction, as this critic does and so many people in our time do, is such an impoverished view of humanity. It is to accept on a spiritual, moral level, as a complete account of human beings, the artistic extreme so poignantly expressed in Giacometti's wire-thin, eroded figures.

Brokenness and Grace

It is one aim of the great religious traditions to take us beyond this reductionism. They tell us that, yes, brokenness and incompletion are the human condition. But they tell us also that our hopes for grace and goodness work through our vulnerability and weakness. And they speak to our abiding hunger for transcendence and redemption. They respect the mysterious fullness of our desire to transcend our faults, of our need for significance and ultimate meaning, and of our cry to know that our creation has not been in vain.

To debunk religion is child's play. Our culture revels in it, and when encountered in the crude and simplistic form of this review, it is easy to dismiss. But there are considerably more serious challenges to our religious traditions coming from not only the perspective of psychology, but from sociology, anthropology, history, and various branches of science. These challenges are bracing; they are exciting. And they should be met not only by those with serious commitments to religion but by all persons of cultivated intelligence.

To grapple with the ideas of Augustine, Aquinas, Kierkegaard, Bonhoeffer, Barth, Otto as well as with their great intellectual adversaries such as Feuerbach, Freud and Marx, is to enter into a dialectic of intellect and spirituality that, however short it leaves one from certainty and repose, can illuminate one's life.

To enter this dialectic with intelligence will not produce the cynicism of foreclosure of vision but rather the opening of possibility.

To stay open is not easy. There is a tendency in many of us, certainly I see it in myself, to domesticate our terrors, to cut them down to manageable size. Life is so large and threatening a problem that we narrow down the world, shut off experience, and turn away from big questions: whence did I come, where am I going, and to what end? And so we tend to live, as William James put it, "in the moment, eager to ignore and forget." We do this at our peril. For in living only on the visible immediate dimension of our lives, it is all too easy for us to live lives of intense self-seeking, in which status and possessions become all-important because they are all we can attach to.

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A Head Looks at Academic Integrity

John Hanly
Head
The Pingry School (NJ)

One of my favorite literary detectives is a man called Spenser. Don't confuse him with the character on the television show *Spenser—For Hire*. The television show is based on the books, but the T.V. character lacks the complexity, the depth and thoughtfulness of the literary character. Spenser is a private detective who lives in Boston. He is an ex-cop, ex-boxer, gourmet cook and an expert on beers. Above all, he is a moral man trying to understand how to live in an immoral world. He is surrounded by crime, vice, temptation, and he has to work out for himself how to maintain his own values in that world, a world in which there are no rules except those that each person makes for him or herself. In one book, Spenser says something that is so powerful that I hope that if you never remember anything that I say, remember this: Spenser is asked by a crook why he insists on being honest. "Integrity," he replies, "means that you are always free." A person of integrity, he is saying, never has anything to hide, never has to be afraid that someone will discover a horrible secret about him, never has to be ashamed.

Code and System

I tell you this because I have been present recently at a lot of discussions on the Honor Code and Honor System, and I want to talk to you today—not to tell you to be good, although I hope you will be—but to tell you how I see the Honor Code and Honor System.

First, there is an important difference between the Code and the System: The Code is about a larger standard of behavior that applies to all that a student does as a member of the school community. It is not so much a matter of rules to be lived up to, as a matter of general attitude and spirit. A student will act as a member of the group, working with it rather than calculating his or her own advantage.

The Honor System, however, is the way that one part of the Code is administered, that part being taking tests, quizzes and examinations and doing homework. The Honor System basically says:

1. You must not cheat
2. You must not plagiarize
3. You must report anyone who cheats or plagiarizes

When we read it carefully, we see that the Honor Code sets the standards for behavior for all of us, students and teachers, and I hope that we will never deviate from those standards, that we will constantly keep them before us as guides to help us be decent, moral people. My sense is that people at Pingry try hard to reach that goal, and I hope that we will always strive to do so.

But I have talked to many people, parents, trustees, alums, students, and teachers about the effectiveness of the Honor System. Does it work, or do people cheat or plagiarize despite signing a pledge to the contrary? From what I have ascertained, the Honor System does work, but it does not work perfectly. In other words, a lot of students do not cheat or plagiarize, at least on major tests, but there are some who do. Furthermore, there is general agreement that the clause that says a student must turn in a fellow student who is cheating is ignored by 99% of you. Now one way of looking at the situation is to say that the Honor System helps more than it hurts, and that we should not worry if most students ignore one aspect of it because, if only one person follows it, it is of value. Well, I don't believe that, because I am convinced that if you have a principle, a rule that is as vital to a school as the Honor System is to Pingry, then you must do everything you can to make it work as perfectly as possible. There is nothing more harmful to an institution than when it publicly proclaims that it follows a particular set of rules and values when, in fact, everyone knows that it doesn't follow those rules. I am certainly open to considering changes in the Honor Code and System, but I am unalterably opposed to claiming to do one thing when in reality we are doing something quite different.

So where do we stand? Again, remember that I am speaking as a newcomer.

1. I have the strong sense that most people here try to follow the Honor Code—that is, you treat one another sensitively and thoughtfully, and you are aware of concerns larger and more important than your own personal concerns.

2. There is less cheating and plagiarism here than at most schools that do not have an Honor System.

3. Almost no one turns in fellow students who cheat.

The Need for Commitment

So what to do? First, I am convinced whatever we do must be a community effort: that is, we must work together. There is no point in adults simply lecturing the students, saying "Follow the Honor System." Adults and students must make a real commitment together; we must agree on what we want and how to achieve it. Never forget that the Honor System was originally established by students for students. I have established a faculty committee and a student committee, both of which will be asked to come up with ways in which the Honor Code and/or Honor System can be made more effective.

Both committees will be consulting with the faculty and students as a whole body and in small groups, and they will also consult with parents, trustees and alums. The committees will then come together to produce a plan to implement their recommendations, and their report will be presented to the whole community, a report which will help us invest our time, our energies, our beliefs in the Honor Code and Honor System. I am not going to try to anticipate the report of these committees, but I will say this: I believe that the Honor Code and Honor System are incredibly powerful guidelines in helping us lead our lives, as important for adults as for teenagers, incredibly powerful because they make clear two of the most important lessons that we can learn and relearn.

One, education is a cooperative venture between students and teachers, one in which we work with one another, not against one another, and one in which students bear as much responsibility as teachers.

Two, the Code and System remind us that moral decisions are most difficult and most significant when we have no one to answer to but ourselves, when only we will know if we cheat, when only we will know the truth.

I will further say that I am convinced—after all my conversations of the past three months—that there is an overwhelming desire to make the Code and System work as close to perfection as is humanly possible. I think that there is nothing more important this year than doing that: I am totally committed to it, I urge you all to join me on this crusade, a crusade that will, as Spenser would say, allow us to be free.

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Sportsmanship

Brian R. Walsh
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Adapted from an article in ***The Buckley Letter*** *and used with permission*

Sportsmanship is a topic of frequent reference at Buckley, and, next to safety, of the highest priority in our sports program. Occasionally at assemblies I will cite one or two aspects of sportsmanship I wish to be emphasized, and I know how important this subject is to parents in establishing a hierarchy of values for their children.

What Sportsmanship Is

Since this is such a significant topic for all of us, I feel it is appropriate that we define our concepts of sportsmanship and keep in mind to what extent they apply to the growth of our children *beyond* sports. The following represent some points we stress from time to time with our athletes when we talk about sportsmanship.

1. **Always play your hardest.** This does not mean running up a score, for in a mismatch you can always concentrate upon improving some aspect of your game, while allowing your opponent to play to your weakness, or, in the case of team sports, substitute early and frequently.

2. **Accept officials' decisions** as if the play went that way, even if you feel it did not. It is not how it happened but how the official saw it happen. Until instant replay comes to school athletics, this is part of the game.

3. **Sports are supposed to be fun—act like you are having fun.** Be cheerful, enthusiastic, and positive. No one enjoys playing with a sorehead or a whiner.

4. **Always praise your opponents' good plays whenever the chance comes up.** Don't just wait until the end of the contest for an empty "Good game" kind of comment. Besides being the right thing to do, praise will take the sting out of the

play, make you more alert for the next action (by putting the other one behind you), and earn you the respect of your opponents.

5. **Do not make excuses—before, during, or after a contest.** Complaints about injuries, officials, equipment, weather, etc. only make you look bad.

6. **Do not circumvent the rules or officials.** Such behavior does not constitute smart play or being "a real competitor"—it is cheating. People who cheat are never to be trusted, are not worthy opponents, and are obviously not nearly as good as they want others to think they are.

7. **As a player, spectator, or bench warmer, never jeer an opponent.** Cheer on your own side. Jeering is unsportsmanlike conduct at its worst. It can also cause some repercussions, such as firing up your opponents or even causing them not to want to play against you anymore.

8. **It is as important to be a gracious winner as it is to be a gracious loser.** It makes you more of a "winner," and you will find that others will be pulling for you instead of rooting against you.

Why Sportsmanship is Important

The usual reasons given for the need for good sportsmanship include basic considerations such as a "code of ladies/gentlemen," the spirit of fair play, respect for opponents, and keeping competition controlled, civilized, and more enjoyable. Some more significant reasons have to do with the transfer of these values to lifetime habits in working with others:

- Developing self-discipline and self-control.
- Learning respect for others with opposing views and interests.
- Accepting hard luck as inevitable and judgments of authority as part of a less-than-perfect life.
- Acquiring the capacity for going on to greater challenges despite adversity.
- Reinforcing the golden-rule approach in all relationships.
- Conditioning a sense of fairness in all endeavors.
- Making one sensitive to the need to praise others.
- Establishing a positive outlook on all aspects of life.

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Manners Make the Person

The Rev. F. Washington Jarvis
Headmaster
Roxbury Latin School (MA)

Adapted from an address to the student body and published in the school's Newsletter. Used with permission.

Manners makyth man—"Manners make the person," we would say today—is the ancient motto of Winchester College, one of the great schools of England. When I first heard this motto over 25 years ago, it struck me as shallow in its seeming focus on form and outward appearance. Is it true: Do manners make us who we are?

If we picked a motto for our time (America since 1960), I think it would probably be "Do your own thing" or "If it feels good, do it; it must be good if it feels good." When I first started teaching in the late '60s, an English teacher couldn't correct a set of papers without some student telling him that he was not allowed to object to anything he wrote because he (the student) was "expressing himself." "If that's how I feel, then it's valid; you can't criticize how I feel." Never mind if his precious self-expressing thought was a non sequitur or illogical or incompletely reasoned out or just plain wrong. "Self-expression" carried the day. After "self-expression" came self-satisfaction, self-contentment, self-fulfillment, self-realization, and self-everything-else. These "self-" words still remain the fashionable buzz words of our time.

Manners are Unnatural

On the other hand, "manners" is not a fashionable word in our time. Manners have fallen into disfavor mostly because they are regarded as "unnatural" and "artificial." And, above all, it is fashionable in our time to be "natural" and "real" in our self-expression. Manners are unfashionable because they are a curbing or denial of self-expression. As such, manners are often considered "fake" or "hypocritical" or "dishonest."

Any discussion of manners must begin with the admission that manners *are* unnatural. When we use underarm deodorant we are being, I suppose you could say, dishonest; we are "covering up" our real honest-to-God self-expressing smell. The same goes for brushing our teeth in the morning or combing our hair or taking a shower each day. All are unnatural, artificial denials or curbings of our real selves.

Manners are unnatural; that's why little children have to be taught manners. Little children defecate in their pants. Little children interrupt. Little children eat with their fingers and don't use a napkin. Little children wake up their parents in the middle of the night if they're hungry or thirsty. They are expressing themselves; they are being their natural selves. They have to be taught manners—forms of behavior that deny or curb their natural self-expression. In that sense, of course, you can call manners dishonest or artificial or fake or whatever pejorative word you want to use. Manners are unnatural.

When I say to a student, after a holiday, "How was your vacation?" I am, frankly, not always, at the moment when I ask, dying to hear the response. Sometimes I've got a lot of other things on my mind, and sometimes it's a struggle to listen to the response and to appear interested. My expression of interest—"How was your vacation?"—is not always—in the purest sense—genuine. You could therefore make a case that manners are, in that limited sense, dishonest.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the Russian philosopher now living here in New England, writes:

> When Western Society was established, it was based on the idea that each individual limited his own behavior. Everyone understood what he could do and what he could not do. Since then the only thing we have been developing is rights, rights, rights, rights, at the expense of duty.

As he often does, Solzhenitsyn oversimplifies, tends to make out that the present is terrible and the past a golden age. But his distinction between rights (such as self-expression) and duties (which usually involve curbing our self-expression) is a useful one, I think. There's no getting around it: manners are an unnatural duty. They involve an unnatural limiting of our natural selves, an unnatural curbing of our rights.

Manners as the Minimum

Manners are the most rudimentary way in which we acknowledge the existence of others in the world, in which we curb our natural selfish instincts. They are small, simple acts. Instead of plunging headlong through a door, we pause (we curb our desire to get where we're going) so our elders can go before us. When we're seated in the subway and an older lady comes in, we give up the comfort of our seat out of respect for her existence (and out of recognition that we shall someday perhaps need it as she does now). Such acts are inconvenient; they go against our natural selfish inclinations. At Roxbury Latin, we greet one another in the halls and we acknowledge each other's existence by calling one another by name. We say not just "Hi" or "Hello," but "Hello, Mr. Jarvis" or "Hi, Jim." Since ancient Israel the use of people's names has been the most rudimentary sign of respect. We bother to stop to ask, "How was your vacation?" or "What did you do?" or "How are you?" when we might well rather be on our merry selfish way. We also stop, inconveniently, to ask a visitor to our school if we can help her find what she's looking for. *That is what manners are: the mundane, basic recognition that others exist and have as much right to their place on earth as we do.* Manners are the fundamental curbings and limitings of our own self-expression.

Beyond Manners

Manners are the first step away from self-centeredness. But only the first step. If we continue on the journey away from self-preoccupation, we go beyond manners to kindness, to concern for others. Kindness could be defined as manners with feeling and imagination, manners with grace and charm, manners with extra effort.

Kindness goes beyond manners. Manners greets someone at the door and says, "Can I help you?" Kindness goes beyond—it doesn't just give directions. Kindness impels us to say, "I'll take you there." I'll give you an example: Last summer in Ireland, without calling ahead, I walked into the ancient and renowned Royal School in Armagh. A tall floppy teenage boy working intently at some sort of project across the room jumped up from his chair and came over to greet me. "Good morning," he said, "Can I help you?" I told him I was from the U.S. and wondered if I could see the school. His face broke into a radiant smile (what dramatic effect a smile can have!) and he said, "Welcome to Ireland! I go to the school and I'd be happy to take you around myself." Off we went, he showing me every part of the school with enthusiasm and humor. Here was manners with grace and feeling and charm. Here, in fact, was something more than manners. Here was kindness.

One of the rages of the 1950s was a card game called Canasta. My grandmother loved Canasta, and she was sharp as a tack at it. Since most of her friends seemed to be dead or dying, or unable to remember their cards, she couldn't play as often as she wished, and my mother was always saying to me and my sister: "Go play Canasta with your grandmother!" and we were always responding, in the Midwesternese of the era, "I don't wanna." And my mother would repeat, "Go and play Canasta with your grandmother, and act as if you enjoy it!" The "act as if you enjoy it" was, of course, the kindness part. I not only had to play Canasta, I had to go beyond that and act as if I enjoyed it. Now when I was about 14, I became extremely wise, and I said to my mother one day as we were going through the whole Canasta routine, "I'm not going to act as if I enjoy it. I'm not going to pretend. That's insincere. That's dishonest. I won't do it." My mother didn't buy that and replied, "Then be dishonest in this one area." Now I had her: "But you're always yelling at me (my mother rarely yelled at me, but at this stage I referred to every motherly admonition as yelling)...you're always yelling at me to be honest. Now you tell me to be dishonest? What are you asking me to be: honest or dishonest?"

"I'm asking you to be kind," said my mother, "and you're making up excuses to be selfish." And so I went off to be dishonestly kind to my grandmother, and, as usual, in pretending to enjoy playing Canasta with her, I ended up, in fact, actually enjoying doing it.

That happens regularly, I think, when you put on an act. Yesterday at the end of the afternoon, when I was extremely busy, a student came into my office and started in on his vacation. With considerable effort I feigned interest, and, then, remarkably, I didn't have to pretend anymore. I suddenly *was* interested. If you try to show an interest, if you try to whip up enthusiasm in order to be kind, you sometimes are swept up in your enthusiasm and suddenly it's not an effort anymore.

If manners are the first step and kindness the second, the third and final step away from self-centeredness is self-sacrifice. It is possible to go beyond even kindness, so that you are willing to make enormous sacrifices of time and energy for no self-gain whatsoever. I was struck last summer by the inscription on the World War I memorial in St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. This is what it said: "When you go home, tell them of us and say that for their tomorrow, we gave our today." Those soldiers didn't want to die, but they were willing to die for something and someone they loved more than their own lives. "Greater love," said Jesus, "hath no one than this, that one lay down one's life for one's friends."

We can now see the complete sweep of human possibility. We began with the self-centered baby and moved first to manners, then to kindness, and finally to costly self-sacrifice.

The Power of Kindness

I want to conclude by telling you something that happened to me on my third day in Dublin last summer. Back when I was a student in England in the '60s, an elderly priest said to me as we walked along the street one day, "Always give something to any beggar who asks you. It might be God himself you're giving to." For years I have done that, as I know many of you do, though the innumerable beggars on the streets of Boston (as of the past couple of years) now provide a huge challenge. My third morning in Dublin was one of those rapturously perfect days you get once or twice a summer: sunny, warm but not hot, a light breeze, no humidity, deep blue sky. As I stepped out of the building where I was staying in St. Stephen's Green, I inhaled the fresh morning air and almost floated down the steps lost in the beauty of the day. As I reached the sidewalk, however, I became unpleasantly aware that sitting on the sidewalk was a mother and baby, both filthy. The mother held up her dish begging for money. I was jarred. I said to myself, I'm on vacation; I don't need poverty. How dare this woman ruin my perfect morning? With considerable lack of grace I reached into my pocket, and threw a few coins in her dish. In doing so I wasn't being kind or sacrificing myself; I was acting out of the very lowest form of manners. As I tried to dash off, she called to me: "Wait! Stop!" "Damn," I said to myself, "This woman not only wants my money, she wants my time." And I turned around and without an ounce of kindness snapped, "What?" She said, "Thank you! God bless you!" I—barely—said a curt "Thank you" and hurried to escape.

The rest of my day was filled with one unexpected happy occasion after another—some of the richest cultural and personal experiences of my life. That morning I had thought that I was the generous giver and the poor woman the probably undeserving recipient. After all, I gave her my money; she had no claim on it. That evening, upon reflection, I realized that, in the great mystery of things, she had been the giver and I the graceless, grudging, ungrateful recipient. That's the moral of this story: even if you are—like this woman—reduced to the dregs of life, to the lowest circumstances in which human beings can find themselves, no one can take away from you your fundamental civility (the basic manners that are the foundation of civilization), and no one can take away from you that even higher virtue: the

option, the right, to be kind. The woman not only said "Thank you" but "God bless you." We know from many accounts that even those who were imprisoned in Nazi concentration camps, stripped of every possession (even their hair shaven off), degraded by every form of abuse and indignity, still had the option to be kind, still had the capacity to reach out to others.

Never doubt the amazing power of kindness. The kindness of this poor, filthy woman in Dublin—whom I had so resented for disturbing my perfect day—and who could so easily have focused on her own problems, who could so easily have reserved her kindness (as we so often do) for someone who deserved it (rather than asking a blessing on someone who already had far more than she had), the kindness of this woman brought a blessing on my whole day.

I wanted to see her again, this time really to look at her, and—a belated thought—I wanted to thank her. I headed back toward St. Stephen's Green, walking faster and faster until I was nearly running. Panting, I burst round the last corner into the Green...but, of course, she had vanished.

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The Moral Purpose of Awards

Thomas Farquhar
Head
Westtown School (PA)

An address given at the annual Upper School Awards Assembly
June 1, 1990
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To those whom we recognize today for scholarship or for habits of mind or heart that have inspired us, I offer warm congratulations. I participated in many meetings at which you were selected, and I was impressed by your diverse strengths.

But I was also impressed by the many deserving candidates who were considered but were not recognized today. Reflecting on their accomplishments helps us to see our purpose in a broader context. It helps us to connect the few who were recognized with the many whose actions merit special note. We assemble here to make connections, not to separate individuals from the group.

Individual and Community

Throughout the selection process we saw how broadly the qualities that are honored here today are shared throughout this community. Above all, we know that every individual, every human being, has dignity and worth, and that recognizing a few must not be seen as diminishing the worth of others but rather as a way of holding up for recognition those who have given us evidence of the best that is in us all. We are not here today to say *who* is good, but rather *what* is good. We are drawn together as we express these common values.

Reputation and Reality

Another discovery we make today is the connection between our reputations and our true selves. In some of those meetings where the award recipients were selected, we were making judgments based on the reputations they have built in this community. Your reputation is really a combination of what we know you have done

and what we expect you to do. We sometimes imagine that a reputation is a superficial thing; we say that what people think of me is not really who I am.

On the other hand, we are here today to recognize certain individuals for what they have done. The importance of high expectations in promoting high achievement, long understood by good teachers, has been thoroughly demonstrated by psychologists and educational researchers.

Expectation has a great deal to do with outcomes, with achievement. Those of you who have been recognized today can probably think of people who have expected much of you and who, in the process of expressing high expectations, have contributed not only to your reputation but to who you are and who you aim to become. Take some time, today, next week or next year, to thank them.

So, another connection we can make, and this applies to all of us, is that our reputations are not fundamentally separate from who we are. The nature of our true self and the way we are seen by others are all bound up together in very complex ways.

Present and Future

The last connection I would like to make is a connection between our assembly today and our future. I have said that we are here to recognize that which is good. But who decides what is good? How do we know what to value? How do these values change with time?

The epic poet Virgil wrote of Aeneas that he was "*insigniis pietate*"—notable for goodness. He showed deep love for his father in carrying him out of Troy; he showed respect for his culture in conducting the traditional games of his people. Eventually he founded Rome.

But Virgil opens his poem as follows: "I sing of arms and a man." Arms are weapons, and they symbolize the great military superiority of the Romans as they swept across the world claiming sovereignty over native peoples in Europe, Asia, and Africa. And in Virgil's world, the embodiment of goodness could only be represented by a warrior, a man of arms.

Every age needs a new conception of goodness, one which can address the challenges that face us. What stories can we tell, what songs can we sing, to reinforce the values and conduct that will permit our species to thrive?

Today we have honored scholarship, imagination, service, integrity, and sincerity. We believe that through scholarship and imagination we can develop the great tide of knowledge and ideas that will permit us to respond creatively and confidently to the challenges of the future. We believe that habits of service, integrity, and sincerity will give us the strength of will to make the world a better place.

Today's award winners, we thank you for the examples you have given us as we seek to discover the qualities that will best serve us today and in the future.

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The There-Should-Be-No-Pain Lie

The Rev. F. Washington Jarvis
Head
Roxbury Latin School (MA)

There is a lie, which adults tell adolescents, that the teenage years should be years without pain, without suffering. I am touched but appalled at how far some parents go to protect their children against any kind of defeat or disappointment or rejection or unhappiness. As a result, their children are deprived of learning how to deal with these inevitable realities of adult life.

Parents say to me such things as, "You don't realize how hurt my son was not to be invited to his friend's party." But life does not consist of always being included in everything or even in most of what we want to be included in. How will adults cope when they're not invited to things they'd like to be invited to if they have had no experience of being left out when they were younger?

Parents sometimes say to me, "You don't realize how terribly hurt my son was to be cut from the team," or a variation, "I'm worried about his self-image; you don't realize how hurt he was by getting so little playing time." But I do realize—because I was bitterly disappointed on both counts myself as a teenager. I was cut and I sat on the bench. And in retrospect, I think I probably learned more from those "defeats" than I learned from the many and celebrated successes I had in school. I had to dig deep and find self-respect. I had to pick myself up out of the dust and find reasons to go on cheerfully. And I did. And the experience of doing so has prepared me well for all the defeats and reverses that real adult life dishes out to everyone.

A parent said to me last spring, "You don't realize how deeply hurt my son is by not getting into his first choice college. It's cruelly unfair. He should have gotten what he wanted after all the work he's put in for it. He's just been destroyed by being rejected." I said at the time what I have often said in similar circumstances. It may sound glib, but I mean it with all my heart: "I'm never sure each spring who are luckier: the ones who get into their first choice college or the ones who don't."

The "Long Littleness of Life"

I have a friend who was—as a youth—the proverbial "fairhaired boy." Handsome, charismatic, smart. Everything broke his way. He always made the team and was always elected captain. Mr. Popularity. He starred at everything. He got into his first-choice college, and again at college everything broke his way and he went from success to success. But when he got his first job, his boss didn't instantly love him or instantly promote him. And so my friend quit, loudly proclaiming what a jerk his boss was. This first job experience quickly repeated itself in his next job and gradually a pattern developed—he quit one job after another and in every case his "boss was a jerk." His youthful success had terribly misled him to think that everything would always break his way. He had been deprived of the experience of defeat and disappointment and therefore was unable to cope when real life brought him defeat and disappointment.

Frances Cornford, when asked to write a brief memoir of the poet Rupert Brooke after Brooke's death in World War I at age 26, shocked everyone by saying that it was a good thing Brooke had died young because his early years of unrelieved success would have left him (in her words), "Magnificently unprepared for the long littleness of life."

How often at Roxbury Latin I have seen boys rejected by their first or second choice college—disappointed, crushed. How often have I seen these very boys dig deep to discover much more profoundly who they are, what they're worth, and what they want to accomplish in life. How often these boys have said to me later: "I was bitterly disappointed at the time. But in retrospect I'm really glad things worked out the way they did."

It may well be that the most valuable experiences we have in adolescence are not our triumphs or our successes or our popularity, but rather our disappointments and defeats and rejections. We grow more through our sufferings than through our successes.

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A Simple Question

by Michael J. Gorman
Assistant Director, CRIS

As a teacher of biblical studies, some of my most spirited and significant conversations with independent-school students have been about the biblical passages that deal with money. From the prophets' condemnation of economic injustice, to Jesus' radical words about God and Mammon, to Paul's call for economic equality among Christians, these biblical texts have constantly provoked and challenged students.

Inevitably these conversations include comments such as, "Well, what's wrong with luxury?" and "Do you think my parents are spending all this money so I can...[wash dishes, teach school, etc.]?" In other words, nothing less than the entire raison d'être of independent schools is at issue.

My teaching strategy in these situations is to ask repeatedly the simple question "Why?" The result is nearly always a dialogue like this:

— "So why are you here?"
— "To get the best education possible."
— "Why?"
— "To get into a good college."
— "Why?"
— "To get a good job."
— "Why?"
— "To make a lot of money."
— "Why?"
— "To buy a nice house and car, and to provide for my children."
— "Why?"
— "So they can get into good schools, get a good job, make a lot of money...."

At this point seldom do students miss the futile, direction-less lives they have unconsciously mapped out for themselves. The French have an apt phrase for this kind of existence without moral or spiritual meaning: "métro, boulot, dodo,"

meaning "subway, work, sleep." Or, in American terms relevant to many of our students, "Volvo, Dow Jones & Co., Club Med-O."

We who are concerned about the moral and religious lives of independent school students recognize the absurdity of an education, of a life, without a spiritual center that gives it direction. As a new school year begins, it is our challenge to introduce students to something, to Someone, beyond ourselves. For this task there is no standard curriculum guide (not even one available from CRIS), no single method, no examination that can be administered by human beings. At the same time, thankfully, there is no limit imposed by the classroom or the class period. It is an unbounded, unending educational task.

If independent schools have a reason for being, it is to produce students whose excellence in living matches their excellence in learning. Therefore, our students need to find a way of being that takes them beyond academic achievement and material goals, beyond the road to "métro, bido, dodo." They need examples of people whose lives can be summarized in other phrases, phrases like "not for self" (the motto of Phillips-Andover), "character before career" (Stony Brook), and "be imitators of Christ" (Notre Dame—Fairfield, CT).

As the new year begins, we look to pursue and share a vision of the meaning of life that transcends the implicit (and not so implicit) materialism with which our students enter our schools and with which, unfortunately, they often graduate. We can suggest, by word and example, that independent schools exist—and, more importantly, *human beings* exist—to aim for higher goals. Sometimes those goals are captured in a school motto, sometimes they are not. They are certainly clearly expressed in two well-known texts of Scripture:

> He has shown you what is good, and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?
>
> Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind. And love your neighbor as yourself.
>
> "Do this," said Jesus, "and you will live."

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FAITH

That Troubling Word in Our Title!

Daniel Heischman
CRIS Executive Director

Many people know of Washington, DC as a government hub; fewer know it as a place with a vast collection of national associations. There are tens of thousands of people who are employed in various kinds of association-related work inside the Beltway, attempting to meet the needs of diverse groups and interests throughout the country. Name the cause, the concern, the industry, and there is an association for it in Washington. It is a city where the newsletter writer, the conference planner, or the consultant finds lots of company.

Part of the benefit of being in Washington is keeping in touch with organizations that exist to serve a wide constituency, as CRIS does. Admittedly, we're on the modest end of some of these associations, budget-wise, staff-wise. When another association person recently asked me to have our marketing or PR department send him some information on what we do, I felt like saying, "Yes, we have a marketing department, and you're looking right at him!"

To go to a meeting of these association people (yes, there are associations for associations!) is to see the ultimate in "networking." These are individuals whose "people skills" are highly polished: one of the principal aims of such gatherings seems to be to get around to meet as many people as you can, exchange as many business cards as you can. Some of these people are involved in high-gear operations and are doing business on a grand scale. In the midst of such a group, you would think that an organization like CRIS would be barely noticed.

Such was not the case, however, at a recent meeting of these association people. At that gathering, each one of us was asked to introduce ourselves, and say something about the kind of work our organization does. It was striking that two organizations seemed to capture people's curiosity: The Council for Religion in Independent Schools and the American Cemetery Association.

It was not so much how we explained what we did—both organizations obviously in the business of dealing with eternity! —as the images evoked by our respective names. In our case, I encountered a mixture of immediate appeal, immediate suspicion, shock, fascination. "What does an organization like *that* do?" they all seemed to ask.

What's in a Name?

The experience made me think about the name of our organization, something I am well aware that many of you, among our membership, have noticed, considered, agonized over, felt strongly about. School people share the same mixture of appeal, suspicion, and curiosity that I saw in those association executives. In my travels, I regularly hear comments about our title: "Couldn't you just get rid of 'religion' in your title?"; "It took me a while to warm up to an organization with 'religion' in its name"; "You people aren't thinking about getting rid of the word 'religion' in your title, are you?"; "What do you mean by 'religion,' anyway?" "Isn't your title a misnomer?" These remarks bear out what one person said, in the initial months of my work with CRIS, when he told me that one of the first things CRIS does is "raise eyebrows"!

It is a fascinating situation: this is an organization in which over 50% of the member schools are not religious schools, yet still belong to an organization with "religion" in its title. Some of these schools do not seem to mind, others struggle with it, some join quietly—hoping no one will notice!—and still others feel they simply cannot join because of the title. At the same time we also have a large group of schools that, in all probability, would not be a part of the organization unless religion *was* in the title. All of them, it seems, share an awareness that the work of CRIS is not limited strictly to traditional, religious-type work; indeed, it is safe to say that we are one of the few groups in the independent-school world that appeals to so many different types of schools doing an astonishing variety of activities and concerned to implement a vast array of goals.

I, for one, am fond of the "R-word" in our title. It not only provides an important link with our history, as an organization—now nearly one hundred years old—but also serves a contemporary need. In our day and age it is all too easy to sweep the religious notion under the rug, in the name of marketing or diversity or academic respectability. Somehow it becomes associated with limitations—limited marketplace, limited perspective, limited connection with what is real and respected

and prestigious in the world today. For some it is seen as anathema to multiculturalism: as one student recently remarked in talking about her school, "We never talk about religion in our school, since there are so many religions represented." The modern eye and ear have identified the term "religion" with restrictions.

"Religion": Significant, Expansive

Perhaps it is due to my own limited perspective, but the word means very different things to me. For example, in a society in which pluralism and a variety of races and religions will play an increasingly significant role, talking about religion and religious differences is going to become more and more necessary, not less. Differences get magnified out of proportion, or prone to misunderstanding, not by talking about the differences we share but by *not* talking about those differences. In a school where significant diversity of religious expression is found among students and faculty, the prudent recourse is to hold up those differences and appreciate them, not bury them. As with anything "buried" (American Cemetery Association notwithstanding!), it will come back and revisit the school at some point, frequently in less healthy ways. Increasing diversity in our schools makes talking about religion not less important, but all the more important.

Secondly (and perhaps this is due to my own experience, again), I find the notion of religion not a restrictive term, but an expansive term. I connect it less with a set of answers than a rich field of experience worthy of exploration; I find it by nature not excluding those who do not practice a form of it, but rather making room for serious doubt, questioning, debate, even ultimate rejection of it as a meaningful personal alternative. I find it provoking questions or moral action and ethical reflection (which is where CRIS is presently doing a substantial proportion of its work), while allowing for the fact that morally serious people may opt for a life of integrity and compassion without believing in God. I associate it with the "cementing" force in our lives, and I am not aware of many lives—or many schools, sectarian or non-sectarian—that do not have some cementing, unifying component to them.

Do Away with the "R-word"?

Should we do away with the "R-word" in our title? The day may very well come when that happens. In the meantime, or perhaps more hopefully in lieu of it, the fact that it is there may very well loom as a challenge to us, be we religious or non-religious: a challenge to re-think religious experience and exploration as something larger than we normally conceive it to be; a challenge to consider it a

serious academic discipline worthy of substantial thought and possible placement in the curriculum (have you seen some glaring examples of religious illiteracy among your students lately?); a challenge to view it as an aid in appreciating the differences we embody within our school communities. Rather than something that closes a lot of doors, we might look at it as a vehicle for opening them. As opposed to what we commonly associate with religion—moving from questions to answers—we can look at it, regardless of our own religious persuasion, in a way similar to that reported by a very popular university professor of religion as his goal in teaching religion: to move his students from answers to questions.

As I think about that group of association people, and the variety of their reactions to the "R-word," I can certainly appreciate the "evocative" effect that the term can have. At least CRIS does not have to worry, as some of these groups do, about trying to arrive at a catchy, attention-getting title for the organization; it already has one!

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What Makes it Worthwhile

by The Reverend Ralph Pitman

Formerly Chaplain
The Collegiate Schools
Richmond, VA

Once in a while we discover why we spend our lives with young people. I want to share one of these moments with you. I teach ethics at The Collegiate Schools. This year my students were all senior girls. Obviously many of our discussions were about issues which were on their minds about college and the future. They were a bright and open class who were willing to trust me and share this time in their lives with me.

One of my students, Diane, is a very bright young lady who is a student leader in many activities. Diane is as attractive physically as she is intellectually and personally. She never seems to be at a loss when asked to speak to the school, except when she was told that she was asked to offer the prayer on behalf of the senior class at Baccalaureate. She came to me in frustration and hope that I could direct her to some poet or written prayer that would be suitable. She said she didn't know how to write a prayer. She said that she wasn't a very religious person. God just "was" for her, but not in any formal way. She was full of doubt, but I knew Diane, and we had shared many important discussions in and out of class. I agreed that she wasn't very religious in a churchy sort of way, but she had a vital spirituality that enlightened her.

So Mr. Pitman was tough on her. No easy answers for Diane. Imagine that you had a private two minutes with God face to face. You were there to speak on behalf of yourself and your class. What would you say? "OK," she said with a smile.

A few days later while I was proctoring an exam, Diane slipped in the door and put her handwritten prayer on my desk. "Is this OK?" I read it and held back the tears which were threatening any semblance of professional distance. "It's perfect, Diane, perfect."

Dear God:

Although you have not always been at the forefront of our minds, know that we realize you have always been there for us. Even when we did doubt your presence, you were there. Your love came through our family and friends. Your guidance came from our parents and teachers, and your strength came from within ourselves. Our friends, teachers and families are the ones who have brought us to this point in our lives. We hope that you and they know how much this help has meant to us. At this moment we stand on the threshold of our futures, we are both excited and anxious. We have come a long way, but we have a long way to go. We are aware that what life has in store for us will not always be easy or understandable. Please God be with us always, and bless our hopes, our dreams, and our journey. Amen.

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Ritual, Memory, and Meaning

Fran Scoble
Formerly Director, Co-Curriculum
St. Mary's Academy (CO)
Head, Westridge School (CA)

I was recently in a class of ninth-graders in which students discussed the meaning of ritual as part of human experience. They had read a story about a girl's birthday party in which the party was the occasion of one guest's awakening to the fact that he was crossing the threshold between childhood and adulthood.

> *There was such a profusion of gifts that it seemed to him the reason for the party was more than that the day was her birthday. The party, he felt, was to take care of any crying to come.*

As the students discussed the story and the meaning they had derived from it, it was clear that the story was difficult for them because it was so close to their own experience. Their awareness of celebration was much more acute than their awareness of the reason for ritual observance. But what, I wondered, did I understand of ritual when I was their age?

What rituals did I know? Well, church, weddings, funerals, recitals, and, yes, birthday parties. Some of these I dreaded, some I tolerated, and a few I enjoyed. Could I have had the thought attributed to the young boy by the story's author? I doubt it. Though the ceremonial occasions of my childhood were ritualized in their forms, and were recognizable as such to the adults there, to me they seemed random interruptions to regular, daily experience. Nevermind. I was, in ways I could not have understood, affected by my experience of these repetitive occasions.

Our culture, like every culture, finds ways of marking experiences we share in common, means of making private experiences public and of acknowledging the ways in which we share those moments with all people. Rituals are markers that help us make larger meaning of personal experience.

Lamentably, ritual is slipping from our cultural life. Our milestones are often marked in private, idiosyncratic ways that deprive us of that shared sense of humanity and community. Children are impoverished by our neglect of these occasions. I am glad that literature directs their thoughts to the importance of paying attention to the *meaning* of experience as well as to the *having* of experience.

It must be the time of year that provokes me to reflect on ritual, in the hope that we can all be moved to remember, in a season of celebration, those markers that shaped us, touched us, and gave us pause. How I wish, for example, I could see a row of snapshots of all the Thanksgivings of my life. In those annual gatherings would be such a summary of joy and loss—and continuity. Rituals renew our belief in the future, remind us of our past, connect us with others, blunt our greed, and encourage our generosity.

Perhaps in reality our rituals cannot really take care of all the tears to come, but in an age of disappearing markers, it seems newly important for schools and families to savor our ceremonies and celebrate traditions.

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Answering That of God

by Lisa G. Fischbeck
Carolina Friends School

As an Episcopalian, I have frequently renewed my baptismal vows in the context of corporate worship. In those vows I have declared that, with God's help, I will seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving my neighbor as myself; that I will strive for justice and peace among all people; and that I will respect the dignity of every human being. In the context of the baptism service, I have joined in the prayer that the one being baptized be given an inquiring and discerning heart—and have prayed that the same be true for me.

Many life experiences have helped me understand and embrace the depth of these vows and prayers. Among the most profound has been my work at the Carolina Friends School in Durham, North Carolina—a school of the Religious Society of Friends, the Quakers. While Quakers do not make vows or hold baptisms, they do live lives grounded in a deeply seated faith that creation is sacred, that there is "that of God" in every human being. At Carolina Friends School the spirit of human dignity and worth, the spirit of respect and love for neighbor, and the spirit of inquiry are lived, taught, and nurtured.

School Values: Listening, Cooperation

Some qualities of school life have spoken particularly to my own baptismal vows. First: time is given for listening. Every day and every meeting begins and ends with a period of silence, in which individuals are encouraged to leave their desires for prominence behind and be open to the presence of the Spirit among the whole gathered people. And when the silence is broken every voice that speaks—be it student, parent, administrator, board member, teacher—is given equal respect. For in every voice is potentially the voice of God. Students are empowered as they are heard. In turn they listen to others. Even as an adult coming into the Friends School community, I was empowered by the unusual intensity of the listening.

Second: opportunities for competition are minimized; opportunities for cooperation are seized. In competing, some may come out losers; in cooperating,

everybody learns and everybody wins. There are no elected class officials at Carolina Friends School. Student government is done by the entire group or by a volunteer Clerks Committee. Grades are minimized; too often they lead to stratification, to labelling, to the high self-esteem of some at the expense of the low self-esteem of others. Grades provide *ex*trinsic rather than *in*trinsic motivation for learning, and they do not measure the merit of a person. Nor do the scores of standardized tests. In their place, there is an abundance of student-teacher conversation and evaluation. Students know their strengths, and they know they have areas that need work. They do need to show proficiency in primary areas of study; they do need to satisfy requirements. Those who desire go on to college study. But learning is its own motivation. Students graduate with inquiring and discerning hearts.

Respect and Consensus

Third: rules and consequences are put in the context of the health of the individual and the community. Sometimes students need to be separated from the school. But more often, students respond to the respect which they are given by the community. Teasing is not punished; but the community responds to it in a meeting at which students share their views on teasing and being teased, and listen to one another. Graffiti or intentional destruction of property are rarely seen, because the response to such actions does not come in the form of an ultimatum passed down from on high, but rather in the form of thoughtful, caring perspectives of others in the community. The honest expression of the feelings of loss or anger from those who have been offended becomes the disincentive to wrongdoing. The pain of the "victim" is heard, and learned.

Fourth: whenever a task or project is at hand, the question is always asked: "how can we involve students in this?" Whether it's building a performing arts center, calling a new principal, writing a statement of philosophy for the school, maintaining buildings and grounds, establishing a non-smoking policy or determining a long-range plan, students are centrally involved in the work of the school. As often as possible, decisions are made by consensus, and students are engaged in the process.

At Carolina Friends School the Board, the staff and the students explore constantly, daily, the relationship between the Quaker testimonies or tenets of faith and the structures of the school. Such structures hide behind program and curriculum in many schools—such as the outward and visible signs of a chaplain,

religion courses or required chapel attendance at some church-affiliated schools. The structure of a school presents a "hidden curriculum"—how students are evaluated, how decisions are made, how aberrant behavior is handled—through which most of the vital lessons are taught.

Carolina Friends has not altogether closed the gap between its Quaker tenets and its school structure. But it has done a remarkable job of keeping the gap narrow. As such, it offers an extraordinary witness to the process of living out one's faith. And through life in this Quaker School, I have been empowered more boldly to live the faith proclaimed in my own baptismal covenant. Thanks be to God.

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A Two-Fold Providence

Lee F. Gruzen
Parent, Trinity School (New York City)

There is one elementary TRUTH—the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: The moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that never otherwise would have occurred....

—Goethe

I like to leave the larger messages about Providence and Thanksgiving to the clergy. But when I'm asked to write about the Interfaith Religious Education Program at Trinity School in New York City, it's hard not to acknowledge the great fortune that's marked our evolution over the past five years. Since the moment when Sheila Gordon (a fellow Trinity parent) and I first spelled out our simple dreams for an afterschool program for the children in our Jewish/Christian families, the resources —gifted teachers, parents open to learning, enthused children—have always come our way. It's said that miracles happen after a lot of hard work. The program's been hard work. But there have been many miracles.

Not for Children Only

The first one has been the all-too-rare experience of bringing a rabbi and a minister together, to teach our classes and lead us in our celebrations. It can't be emphasized enough how key their role has been. At first, the mandate was a narrow one: they would meet once a week after school to introduce a group of sixth-graders to their Jewish and Christian traditions, using the two cycles of holidays as an entry point. They would also meet periodically with parents to answer questions and discuss the children's work. As we wrote in our first memo, "We are interfaith couples who have been unable to find a satisfactory religious education program for our children."

But it wasn't long before we realized we were also couples starved for a religious education program for ourselves as well. In our effort to deal with

parenting issues, we were being called upon to face even more essential questions about where *we* stood with our own faith (what was it, anyway?) and our spouse's. The advisors we affectionately called our "two bearded wisemen" accepted our challenge and, without preconceptions, responded to our needs as they surfaced.

Openness

The second miracle is the open, welcoming spirit with which the children have responded to our efforts. I spent a decade writing a book called *Raising Your Jewish/Christian Child*, trying to understand the special ways of interfaith offspring, and I believe strongly that children should have pride in and knowledge of both their religious heritages. Whether they're formally raised as Christians, as Jews, or as "both," they need to have a comfortable sense of connection to the two religions that have shaped their families for generations. They need encouragement to make the choices and sift through the conflicts that are inevitably part of that inheritance.

At Trinity we've been able to offer our children, ages nine through 15, a variety of experiences to help build that foundation. We've sponsored courses (on the holidays, religious heroes, and rabbinic dialogue) and joined together for field trips and services in our clergy's churches and synagogues. As families, we've begun each year with a major holiday event, and closed it with a worship service. The parents' eagerness to deepen their understanding of the two religions, through their own discussion and seminars, underscores the message we're trying to pass on to our children: that religion is important, that each of us has spiritual roots that can be nurtured within the diversity of our lives. The bonus for our children is the validation of being "both," and the joining with others who are "interfaith" in an experience that's enriching and fun. We hope they'll feel free and confident as they begin to express their choices of faith and belief.

Community

The third miracle is our growing sense of community. Not only do we feel an increased inter-connectedness to each of the 40 families in the program—a reward we celebrate often—but our ties to Trinity deepen as well. Our school has been an ideal place for us to take root. It's a diverse community with involved parents, large numbers of interfaith children, and a unique balance and partnership between Christians and Jews. The administration, chaplains and faculty have supported us enthusiastically, and although all fees and administrative work are handled by interfaith parents, the school has given us invaluable encouragement, referrals, and space to meet. And Trinity has benefitted from our energy, and the mindfulness we

bring to this aspect of our lives. As a new school year has begun, with its own set of challenges, we count on our community to gather again. And we look to other schools to reach out to their Jewish/Christian students.

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Personal Canon

Richard Spalding
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I've taught Chaim Potok's *My Name is Asher Lev* three times now—and still it takes my breath away. Ostensibly it's a novel about the growing of a boy into a mature artist in the context of the Hasidic community in Brooklyn. As such it raises the favorite issues of lots of reluctant adolescent students of religion...the rebellion against religion as a system of rules...the nourishment of a unique, often misunderstood personal vision. But it raises most of mine, too. How do you recognize a vocation? What shall we make of the hard, hard things God seems to require of us? What is the life and freedom that blooms within the very heart of the rules? I still can't believe that Potok isn't himself a painter—in oils, that is. He *is* a painter of story, myth. This novel broods over the most primal mists of the deep of me and says, each time, "Let there be . . ."

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The Returns of Education

Daniel R. Heischman
CRIS Executive Director

When I tell people what I do for a living, something fascinating but predictable seems to occur, with evermore growing frequency. They begin to talk about their own school experiences, the chapel hymns they remember, the teachers that made a difference in their lives, the struggles that they encountered in those difficult years of growing up. Any mention of the work of CRIS seems to conjur up a lot of memories, some of them quite moving to hear. (As one of these people recounted, "At Chatham Hall, I learned what forgiveness meant; there I experienced it, first-hand, for the very first time in my life").

"Something I Can Return To"

One response has stuck with me, during my early months in this position. An adult male began to reflect on the role his school chapel played in his life—what he loved about it and rebelled against, at the same time—and then proceeded to recount his college and post-college years of doubt and disillusionment with religion. "But here I am a believer again," he added, "and when I was ready to embrace religious belief again, that experience with school chapel gave me somthing I could return to."

"Something I could return to!" Amidst our need to produce immediate results in our schools, impressive and favorable responses to our programs and policies, how often we overlook the value of tilling solid ground, fostering an environment of belief, ritual, commitment, to which people can return in life. We have done a good job of promoting "carry-over sports" in our athletics programs; more attention could be paid to the practices and passions that adults could return to, fall back on, make use of at later stages in life.

Call it planting seeds, creating a solid foundation or merely holding our own in face of adolescent whims or rebelliousness. Whatever way you look at it, it stands in stark contrast to the pervading sense of immediate gratification that demanding

parents and young people seem to espouse these days. "Something I can return to" does not strike responsive chords in a "hands-on" society that lives on credit!

Two sentences, from entirely different articles, struck me in a recent issue of the Sunday *New York Times*. They struck me because they both spoke of an alarming symptom of contemporary society. In an article discussing teenage films, a reviewer lamented the absence of movies that address anything but the immediate object of teen's desires or the brief circumstances of their young lives. At the same time, in an article on Wall Street fortunes, one veteran of stocks and bonds commented, "The greed pressures have built up so in this industry, the younger people want instant gratification. Maybe we have been paying too much too quickly to young people." The scales of "upscale" society are tipped decidedly in favor of the immediate; what role can "something I can return to" play in such circumstances?

It is a challenge to the independent school community to struggle with that question. Moreover, it calls us to discern and hold on to those dimensions of our school life that promote the lasting and the durable. To provide "that to which we can return to" seems like an immediate, pressing need, to my mind; I sense this generation, like those before it, may need it very badly, one day.

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What To Do About Religious Illiteracy

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When I first began teaching biblical studies, I assumed that I would spend most of my time correcting misinformation about the Bible, misinformation inculcated in childhood. Little did I know that most of my students brought with them nothing to correct. The literature of the Bible was as foreign to them as Voltaire's *Candide*.

I have become almost inured to religious illiteracy. I am no longer shocked when a student asks me what the numbers after a biblical book mean, as in Genesis 1:1. I am not surprised when asked if Revelation is in the Old Testament or the New. I am not disappointed when they don't laugh at my best Bible jokes. They just don't get it.

How much they don't "get" can be very painful for the teacher. Last quarter, after several sessions devoted to the Gospel of Mark, I asked the class to write a three-page summary of the Gospel in their own words. They found that assignment painfully difficult. Not only did they find it hard to recall the broad outlines of the narrative, they found it almost impossible to convey the tone of that apocalyptic masterpiece, the most compelling among the Evangelists.

The Perception of Religion as Manipulation

Painful to me, as well, are the attitudes about religion in general they carry around with them. I began one class by asking my students to define religion. At the very least I expected "belief in God" to be one of the very first suggestions. It took ten minutes or so before we got around to that. The first stab at a definition was a young man's claim that "religion is a way of manipulating people to get them to do what you want." I allowed as how that would be a definition Marx would have found appealing. My student's response: "Hey, you don't have to be a Communist

to know that religion has been used to jerk people around." This was a sentiment with which many in my class concurred.

Who (or What) is to Blame?

How is it that bright, articulate high school graduates come to us so woefully ignorant about religion in general and about the Bible in particular? Conservative Christian groups would claim that this state of affairs is the result of the "secular humanism," hegemonic in the pedagogy of our schools, especially the public schools. Secular humanism, they charge, is an insidious ideology that has driven teaching about religion, especially biblical religion, from our schools.

Fear of transgressing the boundaries between church and state may be a more likely reason. Even though the Supreme Court's decisions barring religious exercises in the public schools have also affirmed the constitutionality of discussing religion as part of a far broader curriculum, teachers have been reluctant to do so. To those of us who teach religion at the college and university level, the distinction between teaching *about* religion and religious proselytizing seems clear. For many secondary school teachers the line seems fuzzy at best.

Certainly, we can blame the publishers of textbooks. In her essay, "American Memory: A Report on the Humanities in the Nation's Public Schools," Lynne V. Cheney, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, reserves some of her strongest criticism for publishers who, out of a desire to avoid controversial subjects, have banished religion from the pages of students' texts. "History makes no sense," she writes, "unless the driving power of religious belief is taken into account. To describe the Crusades or the pilgrims or the Civil Rights movement without talking about religion is to distort the past, but wary textbook publishers have done it." In some history textbooks, for example, it is now possible to read about Martin Luther King, Jr.'s role in the Civil Rights movement without learning that he was an ordained minister, that he had an advanced degree in religious studies, that he launched that movement from the pulpits of Black churches. That his very name is fraught with religious significance would no doubt be lost on the student reader of such a text as well.

There are other horror stories to tell. Cheney recounts how editors consciously altered the text of Ray Bradbury's short story, "The Fog Horn," for inclusion in an anthology to be used in high school literature classes. In that story, Bradbury described the illumination coming from a lighthouse as a "God-Light." Those seeing

the light from a sea creature's perspective, Bradbury wrote in the story, would have felt they were in "the Presence." For fear of offending religious sensibilities or causing a furor, both "God-Light" and "the Presence" were deleted. As Bradbury himself observed in a 1979 afterword to *Fahrenheit 451*, a novel about censorship and book burning, "There is more than one way to burn a book."

Able and Willing to Risk?

I suspect the real reason our students remain ignorant of religion and the Bible is that most teachers don't know how to talk about religion. To teach religion well requires more than just "factual" knowledge. Religious traditions are not "objects" that exist "out there." They are the living faiths of people, human beings like us. To study religion is to study humanity in all its richness and diversity; it is to explore the zone of the profound. To apprehend a religious tradition aright, whether Christian or non-Christian, requires interpretation, imagination, insight, perceptivity, human sympathy, humility, lack of bias, and a whole series of qualities—human qualities—which seem to be in short supply in most classroom settings today. For the outsider observing a religious tradition, he or she must creatively attempt to see that tradition with an insider's eyes. For the insider, standing within and holding firmly to a particular tradition, he or she, if dedicated to full self-consciousness, *must* and ideally *will* incorporate into his or her awareness the truth that outsiders see. Risk of change, of self-discovery, then, is inevitable. Teaching religion is—indeed, it *must* be—risky business.

I believe that independent schools are in a unique position to take on those risks and to stem the tide of religious illiteracy. Unlike the public schools, independent schools are rarely thought of as bastions of rampant "secular humanism." All of the independent schools I can think of are dedicated to the sort of broad, liberal arts education of which the study of religion is necessarily a part. Independent schools almost always have greater flexibility in determining what can be offered in the curriculum, including the study of religion. Unlike the process dictated by large public school systems, textbook selection in independent schools is much more controlled. Finally, independent schools are able to be much more selective in hiring faculty. They can not only hire faculty who are academically qualified to teach about religion, but who are also capable of doing so with the sort of imagination, perceptivity, human sympathy, humility, and lack of bias about which I spoke earlier.

Religion is a key ingredient in many of the puzzles we must solve if we are to understand our contemporary world. Surely, it would be a paltry education that took no hard look at the teachings of the Buddha, Confucius, Muhammad, the Hebrew prophets or Jesus. Surely, it would be a paltry education that sought to prepare our students to live in the contemporary world without acquainting them with the religious forces that have shaped and continue to impinge upon that world. It would be to leave school half-baked. I am quite aware that, by this criterion, many secondary schools are sending to college a lot of poorly prepared students. Liberal education, which necessarily includes the study of religion, is almost an endangered species. That does not mean, however, that we have to accept such a bad state of affairs. Things are not yet so corrupt that any of us is forced to remain illiterate. The wisdom literature is still in our libraries. The tradition is not completely snuffed out. If any of us wants to, we can still converse with the great minds of the past, still ponder the key questions of being human. In a front-page article of the March 19, 1989 *New York Times* we read that, after decades of shunning classroom discussion of religion, many American public schools are now moving to incorporate it into their curriculums. Let us hope that that trend extends to independent schools as well.

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PLURALISM

The Challenge of Religious Pluralism: Three Responses for Chaplains

Daniel R. Heischman
CRIS Executive Director

Perhaps nothing strikes me more clearly, in my travels to visit schools, than how the face of America is changing—racially, ethnically, religiously. Islamic schools are now the fastest-growing type of school in the country. Schools even in America's heartland may have upwards of 30 to 40 per cent minority representation in their student body. What some talk about in theory I have been privileged to see in reality: America is changing rapidly, in ways that are exciting, challenging, complex. To the school chaplain the changes can be, at the same time, both encouraging and daunting.

"Until recently, pluralism in my school meant Jewish-Christian," explains one chaplain. "Now all of a sudden the field is wide open: Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim can all be added to the mosaic." On the one hand, the further diversification of an already pluralistic school can seem gratifying to those of us who see promise and hope in heterogeneity. But on the other hand, the school chaplain, who so often represents a particular form of religious expression (usually a Christian one), and who ministers in a context founded in a distinctive religious expression, can find the diversity staggering. "How shall I be faithful to the tradition, yet honor the pluralism?" It is sometimes left to the school chaplain to make spiritual and liturgical sense out of this diversification, and in some cases these challenges are among the most vexing that cultural diversity can bring to a school community.

There are many ways of handling this tension, from the standpoint of school ministry. Let me offer three options, in the hope of shedding some further light on our ministries in increasingly diverse environments.

Faithfulness to the Tradition

One response is to continue to do ministry in the way we have always done it, faithful to the tradition out of which one comes: grounding the school's worship, preaching, and religious awareness in its particular, distinctive roots. "We don't pretend to be anything different from what we've always been"—so the reasoning may run. "If children of other faiths wish to come to this school, fine, but in this chapel and in our self-understanding we have a singular scope." Many capable chaplains use this model of ministry quite successfully. They discover that students of different faiths can find meaning in a particularity of expression, even if it is not their own, and still retain their own identity. Indeed, young people are often far more capable of doing this than many of their elders. In taking this approach, school heads and their chaplains ofttimes feel that the integrity of their ministry and the heritage of their school is preserved.

I would add one note of caution about this approach: it is usually effective in a context where the chaplain has a strong, dynamic personality and has been operating at that school for a number of years—or where the school head has taken a firm stand in this regard. It is very difficult to adopt this style of ministry and school philosophy *ex-nihilo*, especially when the school itself has some ambivalence about its religious identity or mission.

Common Ethical Principles

A second option would be, for lack of a better label, "the ethics approach." In the face of increasing and complicated diversity, the chaplain may choose to focus on those ethical principles that all religious traditions have in common. "There is no way I can, with any integrity, preach the Gospel to these kids," the reasoning may go. "I must find something we all have in common, even if it feels as if we are distilling everything to the basest common denominator." Sermons become discussions of ethical issues, and admissions people soothe the anxieties of anxious parents of prospective students by assuring them that the religious program of the school is "just a forum for ethical issues."

Give this response high marks for taking into consideration the integrity of the student body, as well as a realistic, practical awareness that we are, as a school, hardly a uniform population. It also does justice to the important question, "What *does* hold this school together, as a community, these days?" Where I find this approach wanting, however, is in the downplay of ritual, which can play a powerful role in the life of a school and which young people find appealing and meaningful

regardless of their own traditions. It is hard to ritualize ethical discussions. Likewise, the ethics approach can gloss over or divert attention from a nagging question: "Just what is the religious mission of this school, anyway?" At its worst, the ethics approach can be a detour around an issue that has not yet been fully addressed.

Presence

In my never-ending quest for the *via media*, I do feel there is a middle option between these two opposites, which can do justice to the integrity of both chaplain and students, which neither preempts nor completely solidifies the religious identity of the school. Again, for lack of a better name, I would label this mode of ministry one of "presence."

By presence I do not mean simply "being there," nor a chameleon-like blending into the fabric of the institution and whatever brand of philosophy may be popular or operative at a given time. Rather, the model of presence takes into consideration three important factors about school ministry: (1) Like it or not, a school's ministry depends heavily upon the style of the chaplain, his or her personality, and the largely harmonious relationship that emerges out of a good match between chaplaincy style and individual needs. (2) The chaplain should be a person of specific, particular religious commitment and focus, and should not be afraid to reflect that commitment. (3) Nevertheless, the ministry of the school must take into consideration the growing pluralism that characterizes any school, must be cognizant of how the tradition and particularity of its religious life exists inevitably in tension alongside growing diversification and even secularization.

The ministry of presence can be made tangible in a variety of ways. One chaplain whom I respect very much, and who is clearly representative of a specific tradition, always speaks in terms of "the church believes..." instead of "we believe..." when explaining a Christian belief or practice in Chapel. The point gets made, while taking into consideration the significant number of non-Christians who are present.

Many other good chaplains put a high priority on narrative in their chapel talks, using stories as a means of binding together a pluralistic community. The stories stand on their own, without a great deal of explanation—yet they elicit attention and involvement. Whatever the means may be, there is an affirmation of one's own faith and tradition and a concurrent acknowledgement of the presence of others who do

not share this commitment. It requires a lot of diplomacy and tact, but no less depth of specific calling or personal belief.

Other characteristics I would include as part of this style:

- an acknowledgement of specific religious groups needing to meet for worship, study, and discussion in their own tradition, beyond (but not in place of) school chapel or other religion requirements
- a high tolerance for what I call "school religion," namely, those rites in the life of the school which, though having little if any religious foundation, nonetheless take on powerful liturgical seriousness in the routine of the school. The smart chaplain can see beneath the surface of these puzzling, sometimes archaic customs, to the deep human need for ritual expression
- an awareness that just because a student is from a tradition does not mean that that student is highly conversant or observant in that tradition; in many cases a chaplain is the person who introduces such students to the richness of their own backgrounds
- a sense of humor, as one faces the frequently ambiguous place of religion in the life of a school— yet accompanied by a conviction of the importance of young people seeing, interacting with, getting to know at least one individual who has made a religious commitment that governs values but without obscuring an appreciation for pluralism

Implicit in this ministry of presence, if it is to be vital, is the strong support of the school head. If so much of the quality of school ministry is related to particular style and personality, the school head must be ready to provide the all-essential institutional supports, including a structure conducive to worship and spiritual reflection, a school philosophy that gives the chaplain a framework and position within the life of the school that communicates the importance of the chaplaincy. Without these supports, a ministry of presence will not work.

Few people are challenged to face, understand, and work with the growing religious pluralism in our country as is the school chaplain. His or her calling is to the front line of cultural diversity, where the future of the church and of society itself is even now taking shape.

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'Tis the Season

Daniel R. Heischman
CRIS Executive Director

The holiday period—roughly from Thanksgiving through Christmas—is a time in the school year which can easily surprise us, catch us off guard, bear down on us and on those in our school communities. School has been in session long enough to discover, as one school head said recently, what the real problems of the academic year are going to be. Cherished holiday traditions in the school may be challenged by students and parents who do not necessarily adhere to the religious beliefs which nurtured those customs, or by those in our constituency that question any form of religious values. Finally, intense anxiety and bizarre behaviors can precede a time when students will be spending more hours with family and friends, in the midst of a supposedly joyous time of the year. Confusing, to say the least!

For these days we need no small amount of patience, compassion, fortitude. They can be tough times to endure. Yet I would add another ingredient necessary for "holiday survival": awareness of what these days can do to our families, our students, our rhythm of school life, in contemporary America.

Holiday Difficulties

First of all, there is the ever-increasing media exploitation of the holiday season. As with presidential campaigns, these seasons are getting longer, thereby extending the period of the year when we feel a tremendous gap between what we "ought" to be feeling (i.e., joyous), and what we're *really* feeling (i.e., human). As one former student of mine wrote, "Holidays simply remind me of how happy I should be but am not." In what ways can we *communicate to our school* families that minimizing the holiday "hype" saves not only a great deal of excess energy, but *also lots of psychic and spiritual trauma*?

Secondly, as we send off our boarders and day students to be "home for the holidays," we need to remember that all young people do not look fondly on such extended time at home. Many look upon the opportunity with a great deal of

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ambivalence; family conflicts left unresolved, family troubles with alcohol or substance abuse, can easily surface at prolonged and emotionally laden times together, such as these. For young people, those are difficult issues to articulate, and oftentimes acting out seems to be the only outlet. While we obviously cannot condone such acting out, are there ways we can talk, in general, about what holidays can do to families that are experiencing difficulties?

Thirdly, and perhaps most significantly, there are the religious difficulties these days pose to contemporary families. Many of our families have not made a conscious decision to refrain from regular religious observance, but have, rather, drifted into a position of non-observance. If there are religious differences within the family, old hurts about church or parochial school, lingering intellectual doubts about the existence of God, or time pressures in fast-track lives, such factors can contribute to a gradual drifting away from synagogue, church, or personal piety. These religious holidays can remind people that their spiritual lives (and those of their children) have gone unattended, possibly neglected. It can produce no small amount of discomfort, and the smallest Christmas tree in the hallway or the singing of a carol by their children in a pre-vacation assembly can set off this response.

Our schools can confront these problems with a mixture of firmness and empathy. We can convey to our communities that the traditions we observe and expectations we set for our students are still important and viable to our collective identity, while acknowledging and appreciating the pressures and difficulties these days present to all of us. Such a response bespeaks the unusual, overwhelmingly complex role the school often plays in the lives of our families: in actuality, we're parenting many of our families, seeing them through a difficult time of the year, hopefully enabling them to grow in self-understanding and possibly even allowing them to grow spiritually through the process. For a schoolperson, the awareness of such a heavy responsibility, such a role, can take our breath away!

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Happy (?) Holidays

Michael Gorman
CRIS Assistant Director

A popular holiday tune proclaims, "It's the most wonderful time of the year." For many school people, however, nothing could be further from the truth. Parents complain if manger scenes appear or if holiday decorations fail to include a Menorah. Celebrations reflecting the school's religious heritage are criticized by students, teachers, parents—everyone. People who do not share the tradition of the school's founders appeal, legitimately, for equal attention to their own holidays. How can a school do justice to the pluralism of its constituency without either ignoring the season's religious meanings or selling out to the one thing that might unite everyone — American commercialism?

There is, of course, no one answer to this question. But we have found "success stories" in a variety of schools. Their answers are here described, briefly, for the benefit of others.

Westridge and Madeira

The December holiday season is a very important time of the year to the multicultural community at the non-sectarian **Westridge School** for girls, in Pasadena, California, says the school's head, **Fran Scoble**. In addition to Catholics, Protestants of all stripes, and Jews, the school has a significant number of Muslim students and some Hindu students. The holiday policy—actually a working consensus rather than a formal policy—at Westridge with this diversity is to emphasize values that unite, rather than divide, the campus. At the same time, the school still wants to provide avenues for education about religious traditions and outlets for some expression of individual, personal religious commitment.

Fran Scobble is keenly aware that religious holidays can divide a school, but she also perceives a danger in moving away from the religious dimension of the winter holiday season. "Such a move has the danger of making us value-free," she says, "a mere celebration of commercialism." Instead, she says, Westridge attempts to provide a "meaningful, shared—but not sectarian—approach" to the season. The

school emphasizes such values as peace and the interconnection of the human family, believing that this approach cuts across barriers, binding the community together as they focus on the "core" of religion—the human search for meaning.

Particular forms of religious expression are not ignored, however, at Westridge. The school choirs learn and perform sacred Christmas music (as well as other liturgical music during the course of the year). And during the holiday season the school's assembly provides opportunities for students and faculty members to share what Christmas, Hanukkah, or other religious celebrations mean to them personally—the school encouraging the sharing not only of information but also of belief and values, all in a spirit of openness and trust.

Like Westridge, **The Madeira School** in McLean, Virginia is, and always has been, a non-sectarian girls school. Recently, both faculty and students have felt a need to add a spiritual dimension to school life without compromising the school's intense commitment to multicultural sensitivity. According to **Assistant Head Marcia Jones**, the school leadership is "concerned, yet very careful" about religion and spirituality, and this cautious but genuine interest can be seen in the school's handling of December activities.

The month before "Winter Break" has a multicultural emphasis in which students share and learn about the holidays of Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanza—an African celebration. The school's regular Thursday assembly, which often focuses on national and religious holidays, offers a format for informative presentations on the meaning of these three events. And last year, the school held a Feast of Lights to celebrate a common spiritual meaning for the season, as opposed to both purely secular and sectarian approaches. Each student and teacher lit a candle to express a common goal of service to others.

Holiday decorations go up at Madeira, but they are secular, not religious. Also secular in tone is the annual holiday music festival. Despite this secular outward appearance, the school wishes to make December a time of learning about and celebrating religious diversity, and according to Jones, the girls are very respectful of one another and very interested in the religions of their classmates.

Northfield–Mount Hermon, Andover, Lawrenceville

A situation surprisingly similar to those of Westridge and Madeira exists at schools with very different heritages. **Northfield-Mount Hermon School**, in Northfield, Massachusetts, had a strong Protestant orientation in the past but now has a very diverse population of students and faculty. According to **Chaplain Ginny Brooks**, the school has held on to one explicitly Christian Christmas tradition, the annual Christmas Vespers. This is a voluntary program of choral and orchestral music and, in recent years, of Scripture readings and a short prayer by one of the chaplains. These latter religious elements are more freely incorporated now than they were for a while, when attendance was mandatory. Rev. Brooks feels that this allows the candlelight service to be a more authentic spiritual experience. She also feels that Christian students should be encouraged in other ways to celebrate Christmas as a spiritual event and organizes activities such as Christmas caroling for that reason.

The school has also diversified its religious offerings in December and has attempted to educate, sensitize, and unite its diverse population during the season. The Jewish Student Union on campus, in conjunction with a Jewish faculty member and his wife, who serve as on-campus advisors, has an annual Hanukkah party and sometimes other seasonal activities. All of these are well publicized by the school and the chapel. Although no rabbi participates in the Christmas Vespers, for the first time this year the music will include a selection from "Judas Maccabeus," supplemented with a reading from the book of Maccabees.

During December, Northfield-Mount Hermon's weekly school meeting on each campus gives some students and teachers the opportunity to speak about the season's holidays that are important to them—Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanza. In the past, school decorations, which have always been especially prominent in the dining hall, were all "Christian"—trees, greens, Santa Claus—but in recent years the chaplains have worked with the dining hall staff to balance "Merry Christmas" with "Happy Hanukkah."

Rev. Brooks believes that during the holiday season the school experiences unity, despite its diversity, through two activities that stress the spirit of giving—holiday sisters and brothers (student gift-giving of small presents bought or made), and increased community service activities. Students of different faiths participate,

for example, in the school's "adopt-a-family" program to help provide holiday gifts for those less fortunate.

Through all these activities, the school provides outlets both for individual, particular faith and for shared community concerns.

Somewhat similar to Northfield-Mount Hermon, in heritage and present composition, are **Lawrenceville** in New Jersey and **Phillips Andover** in Massachusetts. Although each school begins its break fairly early in December, each holds a traditional but voluntary Christian service of "Lessons and Carols"—appropriate Christmas Scripture readings and hymns, with music by choirs and orchestras. At Andover, about 25% of the student body attends or participates in the service of lessons and carols. At Lawrenceville, attendance reaches nearly 100% of the school community, including faculty members who, according to **Chaplain Dick Downes**, otherwise never darken the chapel's door. Following the service are house banquets—typical secular affairs with gift-giving and refreshments.

Religious diversity at both Lawrenceville and Andover is also significant and is encouraged throughout the school year in various ways. During December the Jewish community at each school, led by the school's rabbi, has Hanukkah celebrations.

Also evident at these two schools, however, is the secular character of the "winter holidays" season as celebrated by most people in the culture at large. Lawrenceville's chaplain thinks it is hard for a school to be terribly religious about a holiday in a society that celebrates it in a way that is sentimental at best, and fully materialistic at worst. Although the Lawrenceville campus is seasonally decorated, Downes finds the decorations, and the celebration on campus as a whole, to be a "totally Lord and Taylor event." But there are no tensions in the air—either about decorations or anything else.

Andover's Protestant Chaplain Phil Zaeder echos Downes. He finds the holiday season at the school to be a "curious study in the simultaneity of the spiritual, which begins with our charter and which we still encourage in students, and the secular, which we have become, as an institution, over the years."

Miami Country Day School

Miami Country Day School (K-12, 800 students) was bought by the Presbyterian Church nearly 15 years ago. For the next 10 years, according to **Headmaster William Creeden**, the church, school, and parents struggled to define the relationship between the church and school and the role of religion in school life. In the last few years, a solution very agreeable to all has emerged, and it is clearly evident during the month of December.

The solution has been to implement a plan of "educating the whole human being"—including the spiritual dimension—without restricting the spiritual emphasis to Christianity. Throughout the year, the school has monthly "Collections," which are student assemblies with a religious focus, whose purpose is to inform and inspire tolerance without indoctrinating. Two such Collections are held in December, one focusing on Hanukkah, the other on Christmas, with an appropriate religious leader from the Miami area speaking at each about the significance of the holiday.

But the most popular holiday custom that has developed in recent years at the school is the Yule Log ceremony (yes, in Florida!), held one evening in early December. The voluntary and very popular event, attended by 300-400 students and members of their families, celebrates the school's shared spiritual focus as well as the distinctives of the Christian and Jewish holidays. The ceremony includes the lighting of a Christmas tree, traditional (religious) Christmas carols, instrumental music, the lighting of a Menorah, readings about the birth of Jesus as well as the significance of the Menorah, a candlelit procession, and the yule log celebration around the fireplace of a large living room that now serves as the headmaster's office.

Reactions from students, teachers, and parents to both the Collections and the Yule Log Ceremony have been very favorable, says Creeden. These celebrations reflect the school's — and the Presbyterian church's — commitment to faith and spirituality in a pluralistic setting.

In Conclusion

Tolerance, freedom, sensitivity, education—these seem to characterize the school programs and practices described above. What also describes many of them, however, are the words deliberate and courageous—especially in their attempt to

unite rather than divide and also to ward off the temptation to become purely commercial in their celebration of the season.

If your school has another kind of solution to the problem and challenge of the holidays, please write or call the CRIS office. It may be just the thing someone else needs to know about.

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SERVICE

A Pedagogy of Service

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"The primary responsibility of a school is the education of its students."

It's an obvious statement, but a good place to begin when discussing school-based community service programs. If a school is going to sponsor such a program or encourage students to participate, it should strive to develop a program that has *education* as its focus—understood in its richest sense. A school-based community service program should be initiated and maintained so as to incorporate solid educational principles into its structure, supervision, and evaluation. Some principles to consider follow.

A program should have clear objectives. Programs that involve service often have a variety of objectives: career guidance, personal awareness and growth, social awareness, civic responsibility. Though it may not always be easy to distinguish precisely when one objective or another is being realized, it is important to have them prioritized.

Perhaps an example is the best way to illustrate the point. If personal awareness and growth are priorities of a service program, certain kinds of service will be much more valuable than others for realizing this goal. Writing letters for a political candidate may be an excellent civics lesson; planting trees may be a good exercise in community responsibility; but in most cases neither of these projects will provide as valuable an experience in self-understanding as working with special-needs children, or some other project that demands personal relationship.

A school-based community service program should have clear and consistent measures for evaluation. Since part of the educational process is encouraging growth in competence and performance, there should be measures that both student and school can use for evaluation. Such measures can be used by the student to

ascertain personal growth, and by the school to determine if the program in general is providing the maximum opportunity for students. Having clear measures for evaluation should not be confused with some narrowly defined "right or wrong answer" or "competitive standard." If the service program is aimed primarily at the accomplishment of *a task*, then such measures may be appropriate, but other objectives might require very different criteria for evaluation. Obviously, having relatively clear objectives facilitates the development of appropriate criteria.

Again, an example illustrates the point. One student rakes leaves in a city park, thereby working a required number of hours. The task is done, but the question remains: What has been learned? Another student struggles with the fact that no matter how much time is spent, a child's handicap cannot be removed, nor a senior citizen's memory restored—but the student continues to visit, recognizing the importance of the visit in the life of the child or elder.

A school-based program should be structured to help students internalize their experience. It has been well documented that students must reflect upon an experience for it to have a formative influence in their lives. Schools should not be encouraging or sponsoring programs that merely promote experience for its own sake; this is not what education is about! The help schools offer their students to internalize and thus gain the most from a service experience can take many forms; but it should be a conscious part of any school-based community service program.

Schools have as their responsibility the education of students. Today, such an education would seem to imply a level of academic competence, some degree of self-awareness and confidence, *and* a sense of responsibility to the community. A service program can be of tremendous value to the enterprise of education within a school, and to the community at large in the energy and enthusiasm of the students involved. But its greatest value lies in the degree to which students' lives and values are formed; and the school must accept the responsibility to embrace and nourish those experiences that are most formative.

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Serving the Server

Edith R. Lauderdale

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Dwight-Englewood School
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"I have learned more in my two summers of work at this camp [for children with cancer] than 17 years of formal education have taught me. I have learned the incredible value and gift of human life and the art of appreciating it. When I think of my experience I do not think of my helping these kids half *the amount that I think of all they have unconsciously taught me."*

In the evaluation of her community service work, this student illustrates vividly the same conclusion that many adults have come to: community service is educational in the most profound way.

A school considering a service program needs to give thought in advance to as many of the problems and pitfalls as it is possible to identify. For example, financial support may need to include transportation, especially at boarding schools. Released time from teaching is necessary for faculty members in charge of the program. At Dwight-Englewood School, we decided in advance that service within the school itself would be encouraged—but that it would not count toward the required time. We held that service as a learning experience should take students beyond the school, requiring the student to come face to face with those being served. Hence we also discouraged fund raising, even for worthwhile organizations, since it often involves mainly paperwork. Town libraries seemed attractive placements to students who like books, but in not a few cases these turned out to be "boring," and not well supervised. The best projects were often the hardest for students: work with the AIDS hotline, or helping in the local nursing home.

What's in it for the school? During the first three years of required service at my school, I saw encouraging changes in the school climate. Some of them were

initiated by faculty and administration: a provision of more time for school gatherings of various kinds, financial support for events like an OXFAM fast in November. Others came from students: an Amnesty International group, an annual blood drive, a recycling project. Simply *talking* about service seemed to give permission for people to "go public" with the things they cared about.

Two Lenses for Viewing Service

When a school begins to talk about support for a community service program, two lenses may provide helpful perspectives on the issues, dynamics, and benefits.

The first, described by Carol Gilligan and others, is the dynamic between the "ethic of care" and the "ethic of justice." Among most adolescents, the ethic of justice is voiced often, and freely, in terms of *fairness*. It sounds clear, principled, persuasive. The ethic of care, on the other hand, often sounds naive and wishy-washy; described in terms of feelings, it is easily silenced or devalued. Experiences of service to others can help legitimize the ethic of care. It is Gilligan's "different voice," used most often (though not exclusively) by the young women among our students. One writes: *"I saw things I hadn't seen before....I realized how good it makes you feel to do something for other people. I've continued my work at the hospital because I like it. I think that for the rest of my life I will want to do something service-oriented."* Writing letters for Amnesty International, for instance, satisfies the ethic of care as well as the ethic of justice. It becomes okay to talk about caring for people in other places who are hurt. Perhaps, by degrees, such experience in service to others will enable us to talk about people who hurt right in our schools.

The second lens is provided by Prakash and Waks in the Teacher's College *Record* (Fall 1985). Their paper describes "Four Conceptions of Excellence"—proficiency, disciplinary initiation, self-actualization, and social responsibility. Each conception is subsumed in the higher one that follows it; social responsibility is, therefore, the ultimate goal of institutions whose missions stress excellence. Most schools, however, seem to define excellence more narrowly, mostly in terms of only the first two or three of the conceptions. Prakash and Waks describe the failure of our schools to take seriously the highest goal of excellence, tracing the deficiency to "the poverty of social life in schools which are not designed to promote social goals, and where individuals are encouraged to distinguish themselves by maximizing their personal acquisition of information and disciplinary competence." Clearly, experience in service to the community opens the door to excellence

understood as social responsibility, providing one antidote to the individualization of our education.

Required or No?

If community service is so educational, so beneficial, should it be required? At a recent conference for service program directors and students in New Jersey independent schools, it was apparent that this issue is one students want to discuss. Those in schools that do not require service valued the sense of self-esteem they get from doing good voluntarily; one said that the inclusion of people who did not want to be there would spoil the feeling the group had built up. On the other hand, a student who had found her service a valuable experience supported a service requirement, saying that she honestly wasn't sure she would have participated if she hadn't had to. Adult perspectives on the issue also vary; I have become convinced that if we believe community service provides a learning experience likely to be of value for most young people in our schools, we should require it. It is a sign of our commitment to excellence.

One more remark from a student illustrates, I think, a dawning sense of the kind of social responsibility that ought to be at the apex of our quest for educational excellence in our schools. Offering advice to others who are planning their community service projects, the student writes:

> *"I definitely learned more about medicine and hospital work. I also learned about a sense of community. I found many friends* outside *the school community....Put in a lot of time. It is worth it. The benefits are enormous."*

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Making a Difference

The Rev. William S. Coffin
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Washington, DC

Selections from an address to students and faculty at the CRIS/National Cathedral School Conference "Making a Difference" on April 19, 1990.

How Ideals are Preserved in the U.S.

Students arrive at college with ambition and ideals. (Ambition, by the way, is a good servant but a terrible master.) Not long after starting their freshman year, students realize they have to "park" either their ambition or their ideals. Since colleges promise success to people with ambition, not ideals, students pursue their ambitions and shove their ideals into the closet. After college, they get the job of their ambitions, get married, buy the house of their ambitions, and have kids. Then they open their closet, take out their old ideals, and say, "Here, kids, play with these!"

Education and Ideology

Every country's education reflects its ideology. In the U.S., freedom of thought, of choice, and so on is more important than helping others. And that is the message from the educational establishment.

The American Dream

For a long time now, the American motto has been "Enrich thyself." College freshmen don't go to college to become better, but to become better off. In a recent poll, 73% of entering college freshmen said that the chief reason they were going to college was to become "very wealthy."

Cogito ergo sum?

People are always trying to prove that they are important, that they are someone, or simply that they are. "I think, therefore I am." "I am smart, therefore I am." "I am rich, therefore I am."

The academic community says, "*Cogito ergo sum*"—"I think, therefore I am." Religious and moral communities say, "*Amo ergo sum*—"I love, therefore I am."

Career Obligations

Every high school graduating class should circulate the following pledge for all graduates to consider signing:

> *"I pledge to seek only that employment that benefits humankind and does not harm the environment."*

Charity or Justice?

What did the prophet Amos say? "Let charity roll down"? No! "Let *justice* roll down." Why? Charity is good, but it cannot replace justice.

Why Fight Evil?

There are two reasons to fight evil: to change it, and to be sure it doesn't change me.

The Example of the Articles of Confederation

Why did the Articles of Confederation fail? Because they were not *centralized*. The young nation would not have survived as a nation with the Articles of Confederation.

Today, in the same way, we must picture a new kind of world in order to survive the triple threat of nuclear genocide, environmental destruction, and poverty. We must have moderating national sovereignty and increasing global loyalty; as much support for international law as for national law; an international income tax; and widespread use of solar energy.

No nation is safe until all nations feel secure.

What Should I Expect from People?

Have *high* standards but *low* expectations. That way, you'll be pleasantly surprised.

How can I Make a Difference in the World?

First of all, it helps to have a religious point of view. For one thing, the religious person knows that human unity already exists because everyone is created by God and, for the Christian, Christ died for all in order to preserve that unity. Human unity, for the religious person, is not something to create but to *recognize* and *manifest*.

Secondly, the religious person knows that love doesn't *seek* value but *creates* it. Love elevates the one loved. The religious person doesn't have to prove himself or herself, only express him- or herself, because love and worth are given by God.

Thirdly, the religious person can "hang tough." You can be persistent even when you can't be optimistic. You are a "long-distance runner."

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